Punta Gorda

TRANSPORTATION BUILDOUT STUDY

Final Report
February 15, 2019

PUNTA GORDA

Transportation Buildout Study

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Introduction and Key Issues

CHAPTER 1

Chapter 1 - Introduction and Key Issues

Introduction

The City of Punta Gorda strives to maintain a high quality of life for its residents and visitors. The City's location within Charlotte County on the south side of the Peace River presents unique transportation challenges due to the growth in Charlotte County and southwest Florida in general. Population in Florida is forecasted to increase by 40 percent through the year 2045 and much of this growth will occur in central and south Florida. Thus significant increases in travel through the City will occur even if no additional growth were to occur within the City itself. The anticipated regional growth and growth of the city, combined with the geographic constraints of a coastal community requires an understanding of long term transportation demands and opportunities to adequately prepare for the future. The purpose of this Punta Gorda Transportation Buildout Study is to identify existing and future transportation needs of the City to guide future transportation planning efforts.

Report Objectives

The key objectives of the Transportation Buildout Study are identified below:

- **Identify Long-Term Transportation Needs:** This report documents major existing and anticipated future transportation issues in the City and immediate Planning Area surrounding the city.
- **Context Classification:** Recently, the Florida Department of Transportation fundamentally changed the way it sets standards for the planning, design, and maintenance of the State Highway System. This will apply to roadways such as US 17 and US 41 in the City. This new approach considers the existing and future land use context to help guide the appropriate standards. This report identifies the appropriate context classifications for roadways within the City and surrounding planning area.
- **Provide Strategic Guidance:** The ultimate objective of this report is to identify the key transportation projects needed to address future transportation demands which should be considered in future planning and project prioritization efforts. This includes the future development of he Charlotte County/ Punta Gorda MPO 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan.

Report Approach

This report was developed based on information and guidance from both technical analysis and feedback from key stakeholders in the community. The technical analysis included the development of long term population and employment forecasts for the City and surrounding planning area, identification of existing transportation issues, and a forecast and analysis of future transportation conditions. Stakeholder input was valuable in ensuring that the technical process address immediate concerns along with stakeholder perspectives as to the location and intensity of future growth in the area and related transportation concerns.


SHIMANO

CHAPTER 2

Planning Background

CHAPTER 2

Chapter 2 - Planning Background

Introduction

Guidance for the development of the Transportation Buildout Plan gave consideration to the stakeholder interviews, review of prior plans and development of the forecast population and employment for the area. For the purpose of this analysis, the geographic focus of the project included the existing city limits of the City of Punta Gorda and the defined planning area illustrated in Figure 2-1.

Previous Studies and Plans

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

Punta Gorda's Transportation Element presents the City's vision for an integrated and balanced multimodal transportation system which safely and efficiently accommodates walking, bicycling, public transportation, and automotive traffic. The plan is intended to assist in developing streets, sidewalks and paths that are integral components of community design, supporting functional neighborhoods and retail centers, increasing community identity, promoting civic awareness and responsibility, and enhancing the quality of life for the entire City to ensure the greatest possible economic and social benefits for all residents.

Within its Alternative Transportation section, the document emphasizes that areas having a mix of land uses in close proximity tend to offer increased opportunities for modal choice. The City has worked hard to create infrastructure for, and actively promote, such transportation options as walking, biking, and transit, and is committed to maintaining a roadway network that accommodates these modes.

FUTURE LAND USE

The City of Punta Gorda's Future Land Use Element establishes a desired vision for development that will govern the pattern of future growth in accordance with the State of Florida Comprehensive Plan. Central to this vision is the protection of local natural, historical, and cultural resources, as well as adherence to a framework of compact and contiguous development. The Future Land Use Element establishes several future land use designations which serve to promote compact growth and permit a range of residential, commercial, preservation, and recreational use densities and intensities. The primary policy goals specified in this document include:

- Promote compact and contiguous growth patterns, and discourage urban sprawl
- Limit the adverse impact on and protect natural resources and ecosystems
- Promote the efficient and cost-effective provision of public infrastructure and services
- Promote walkable and connected communities that provide for a compact a mix of uses and densities
- Promote conservation of water and energy

The document establishes three broad categories of future land uses, including Mixed Use, Residential, and General.

The Future Land Use Element recognizes various land use challenges that Punta Gorda will face in the future. Two central such challenges include vulnerability to storm damage and the preservation of natural resources.

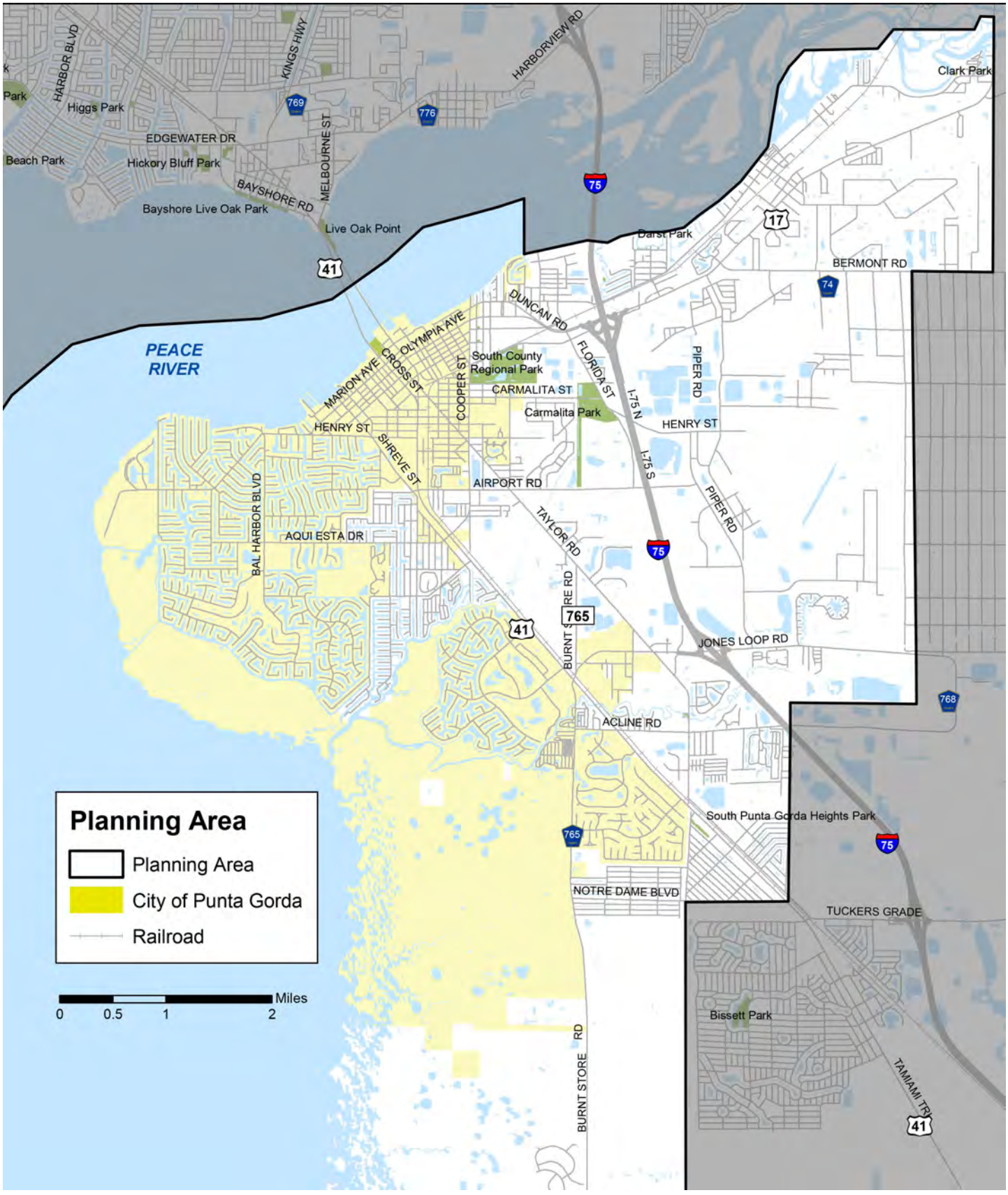


Figure 2-1: Project Study Area

CHAPTER 2

LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

The City of Punta Gorda's Land Development Regulations provide a body of requirements that facilitate safe and orderly growth and ensure that growth supports compact and contiguous development, increases collective security and community identity, and enhances economic and social conditions. The City of Punta Gorda classifies three groups of regulating districts, including base districts, overlay districts, and planned development districts. The City's base districts are established in a hierarchy from "highest" to "lowest", with the Environmental Preserve District being the most restrictive, and the Public District being the least restrictive. The City's four overlay districts identify special provisions in addition to those in the underlying base districts. Finally, planned development districts establish regulations for the unified planning and development of tracts of land held in common ownership or control. This provides for the development of new neighborhoods and the revitalization or extension of existing neighborhoods, structured upon a network of interconnecting pedestrian-oriented streets and other public spaces.

Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder Interviews were conducted with key community members including elected officials, civic organization representatives, and business leaders in early 2018. The purpose of the interviews was to solicit feedback and guidance for three areas as summarized below.

GROWTH CONSIDERATIONS

Stakeholders were asked a series of questions regarding future growth. The following key growth consideration themes emerged. Predominately, respondents indicated that most growth in the planning area will occur to the south (Burnt Store Road area) and to the area east of US 41 and to the south of the airport. Approximately, 25,000 residents should be expected in the area. The key employment indicators included aviation and related airport activity. WMU just announced (2-13-19) they are pulling the plug on their Punta Gorda campus. They will be 100% gone by August 2019. Significant concerns were raised regarding the available workforce to sustain businesses reliant on service employees during the peak season. It was noted that as new full-time employment opportunities capture the previously seasonal employees creating challenges for the seasonal employers. Attention was also directed to the proposed Sunseeker Resort proposed for the north side of the Peace River which would result in demands for new employees and create additional traffic congestion in the City.

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

Stakeholders were likewise asked about other future considerations or concerns for the City. Key themes included the desire to maintain the existing character of the City as a small town on the water with relatively low densities. Counter to the lower densities comment was the need to face economic realities that the waterfront locations (especially in the downtown area) have much higher land costs and will likely require much higher densities to be financially feasible. There was an understanding to create a ”year round” economy and reduce the seasonality of employment opportunities in the City, this included support for expanded commercial development in the City. Stakeholders also comment that the community has a high percentage of retirees and that it will be increasingly important for the city to attract younger residents to support employment expansion in the City. Respondents also commented that they anticipate technology changes such as autonomous vehicles and the shared economy (UBER, LYFT, gig employment, etc.) would fundamentally impact the City but there was not a clear consensus on what these changes would look like or mean for the City.

TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Finally stakeholders were asked specific questions about transportation in the area. Key themes included the need to address potential impacts of the proposed Sunseeker resort proposed on the north size of the river. This related well to comments regarding the one-way pairs of US 17 and US 41. There was a shared perception that the one-way pairs were a detriment to development in the downtown and that increases in traffic on these corridors were not sustainable. Respondents commented that a new bridge should be considered to address future travel demand increases and to divert regional thru-traffic away from the core of the downtown area. Comments were also made regarding the need to improve both vehicle and pedestrian access across the US 41 one-way pairs at Retta Esplanade. Currently, the US 41 one-way pairs bisect downtown with high volumes of relatively high speed traffic for a downtown area. The need to improve traffic circulation at Retta Esplanade is vital due to the US 17 one-way pair circulation pattern that makes it difficult to travel from west to east north of US 17. Generally, stakeholders put an emphasis on safety, improving existing roadways, promoting a bicycle friendly community, and specifically expanding the multi-use trail system in the City and surrounding area. Stakeholders also commented on the provision of fixed route public transportation. Stakeholders recognized that there is need for fixed route transit in the community to support economic development and assist the economically disadvantaged but that the land uses patterns in the community are not conducive to a successful traditional fixed route public transportation system. If provided, fixed route transit would likely need to fill a niche market such as Nickel Ride, a private tip based short trip golf cart taxi service.

CHAPTER 3

Planning Assumptions

CHAPTER 3

Chapter 3 - Planning Assumptions

Introduction

This chapter addresses key planning assumptions to address future transportation needs in the City. Two key assumptions are most significant. The first is the forecast of future population and employment in the City and surrounding planning area. The forecast population and employment has a direct influence on future travel demand. The second element is identifying the future Context Classification assignment to the roadway network. The Context Classification will guide the appropriate design of future roadway improvements. Together the growth forecast and Context Classification will guide the need for the type and location of transportation improvements in the City.

Population and Employment Forecasts

Population and Employment forecasts were developed as a part of this study with a forecast year of 2045. The year 2045 was selected since it captured both the timeframe within much of the City was anticipated to develop to near buildout and the year 2045 is also the year selected for the upcoming regional Long Range Transportation Plan that will be developed and adopted by the Charlotte County–Punta Gorda MPO in late 2020.

The population and employment forecast for the City and Planning Area was developed with a technical methodology consistent with the techniques used over the past twenty years to support transportation planning efforts in the County. The forecast methodology produces forecasts at a fine geographic level known as Traffic Analysis Zones. From a geographic perspective the forecast is guided by the future lands uses, roadway network, environmental constraints, and vacant land at the parcel level as illustrated in Figure 3-1. The forecasts were also sensitive to overall economic trends that would favor emerging employment sectors as well as anticipated long term countywide and city growth. The forecasts also considered approved development—development that has already progressed through the regulatory land development process.

The forecast of dwelling units resulted in approximately 3,800 new units in the planning area. Employment increased by over 12,000 employees. The planning area forecast reflects approximately 8 percent of the countywide dwelling unit growth and 33 percent of the countywide employment growth.

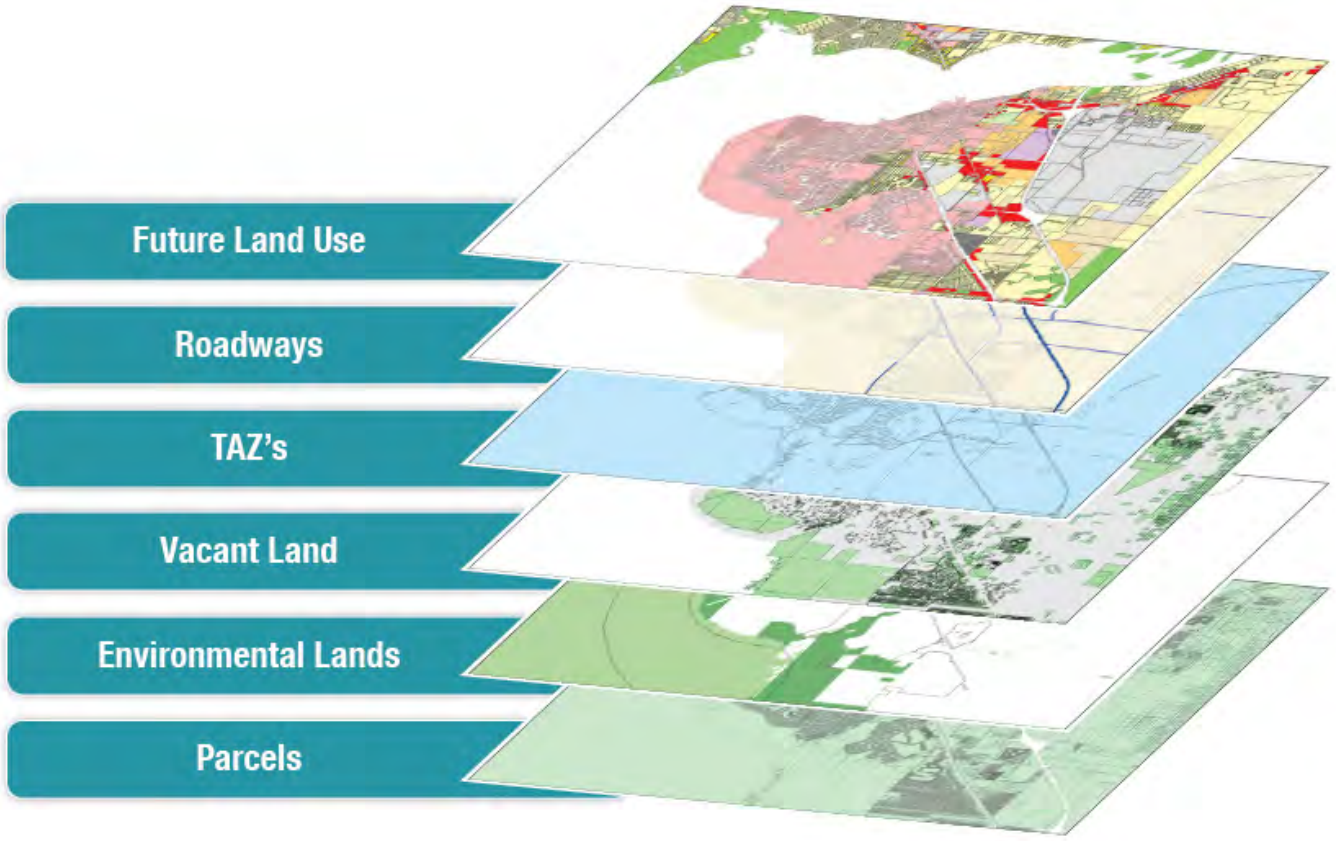


Figure 3-1: Geographic Analysis – The starting point for the population and employment forecast is an evaluation to identify the vacant developable lands

Planning Area			
	2015	2045	Growth
Dwelling Units	19,388	23,215	3,827
Total Employment	19,408	31,686	12,278
Countywide			
	2015	2045	Growth
Dwelling Units	101,308	145,719	44,411
Total Employment	71,199	108,230	37,031

Table 3-1: Dwelling Unit and Employment Growth

CHAPTER 3

2045 Forecast Total Dwelling Units

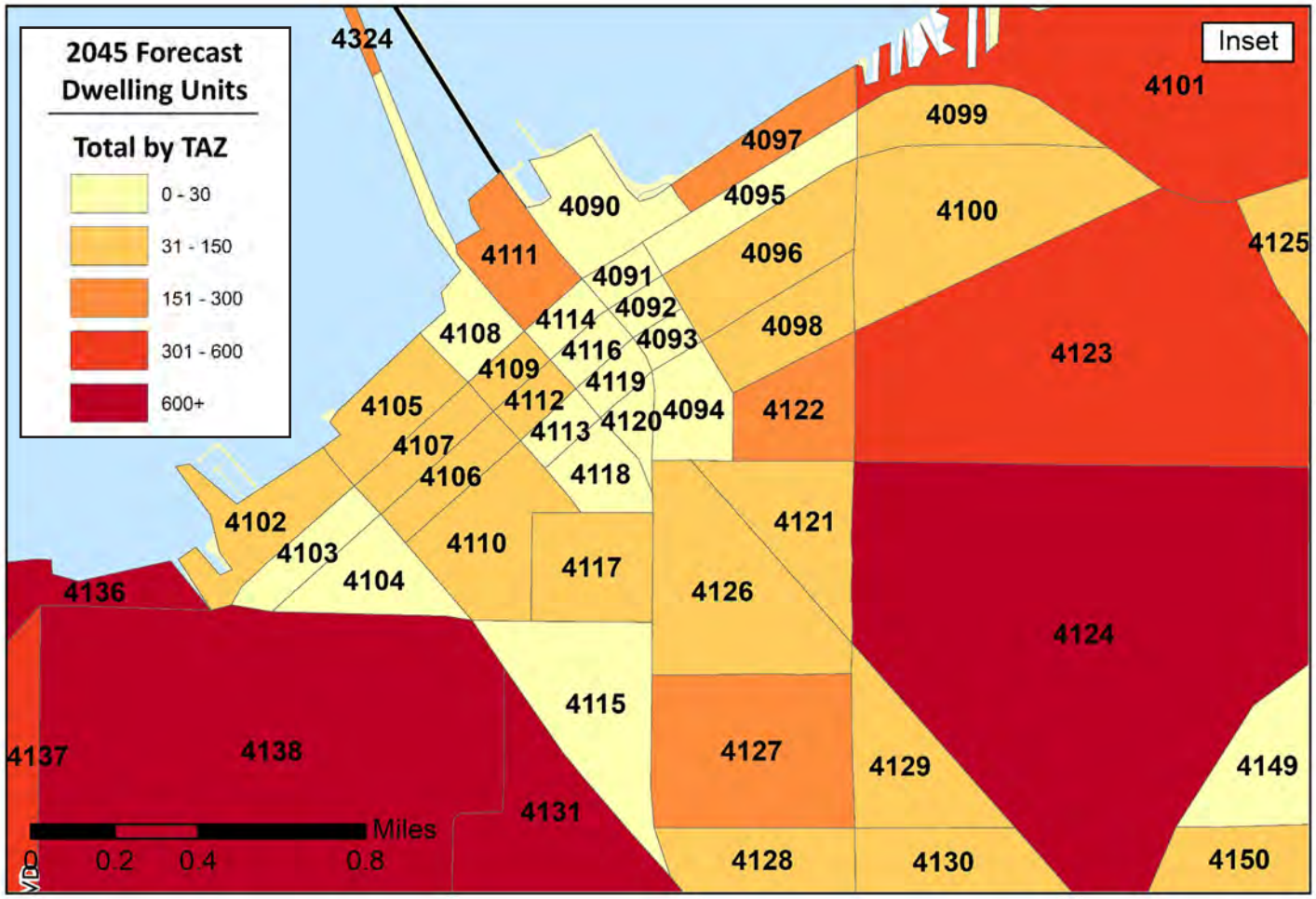
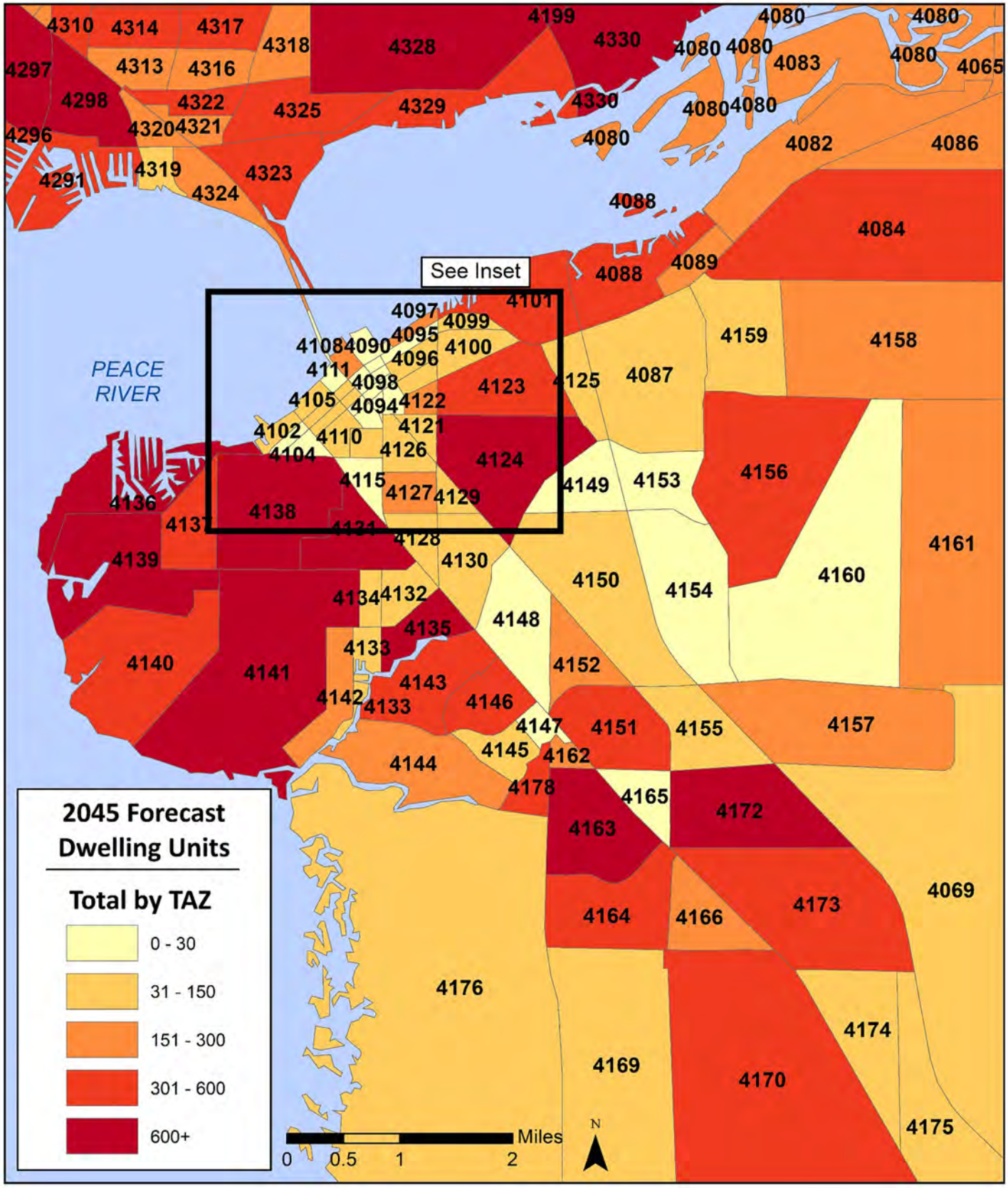


Figure 3-2: Socioeconomic Data – Forecast Total Dwelling Units – The forecasted total dwelling units in the planning area maintains the highest concentration of units in the Punta Gorda Isles, northeast of Taylor Rd. and Airport Rd., and South of Acline Rd./Jones Loop Rd.


See Inset
PEACE RIVER
2045 Forecast Dwelling Units
Total by TAZ
0 - 30
31 - 150
151 - 300
301 - 600
600+
0 0.5 1 2 Miles
N

CHAPTER 3

2015 - 2045 Forecast Total Dwelling Units Change

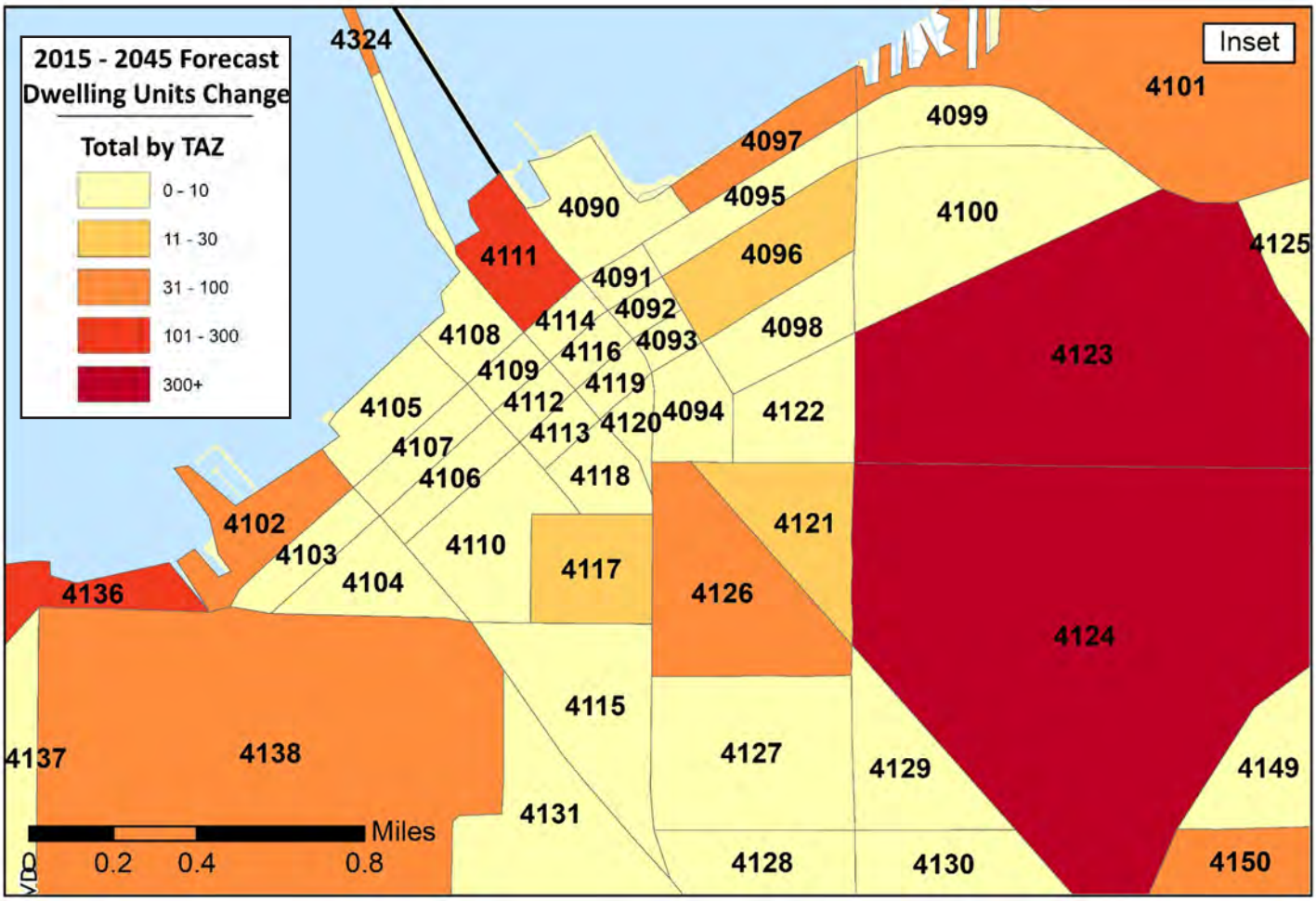
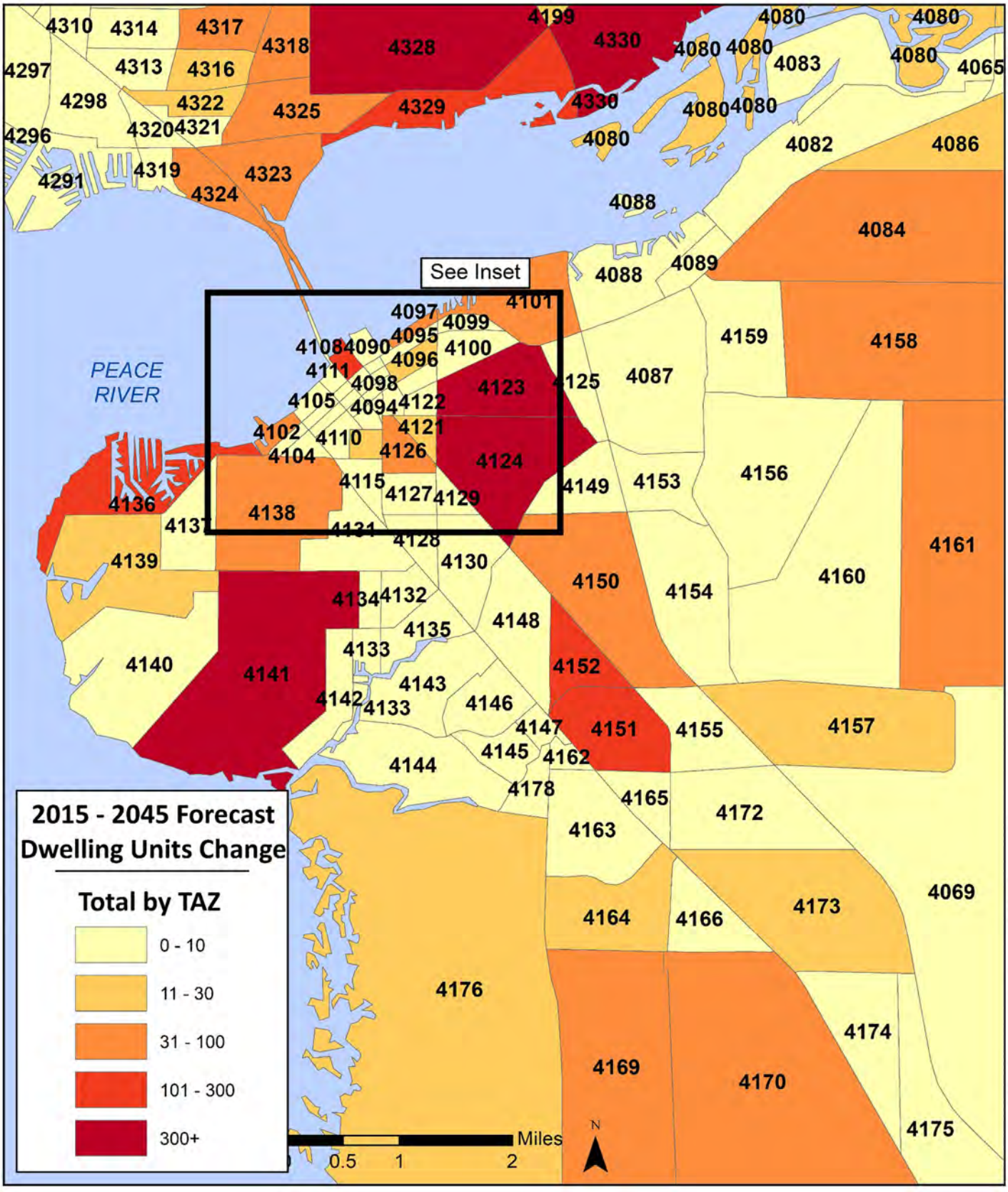


Figure 3-3: Socioeconomic Data – Forecast Total Dwelling Growth – The forecasted total dwelling unit growth in the planning area most significantly increases units south of Aqui Esta Dr and northeast of Taylor Rd. and Airport Rd. More modest growth is forecasted near Jones Loop Rd between US 41 and Taylor Rd.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PEACE RIVER
2015 - 2045 Forecast Dwelling Units Change
Total by TAZ
0 - 10
11 - 30
31 - 100
101 - 300
300+
0.5
1
2
Miles
N

2045 Forecast Total Employment

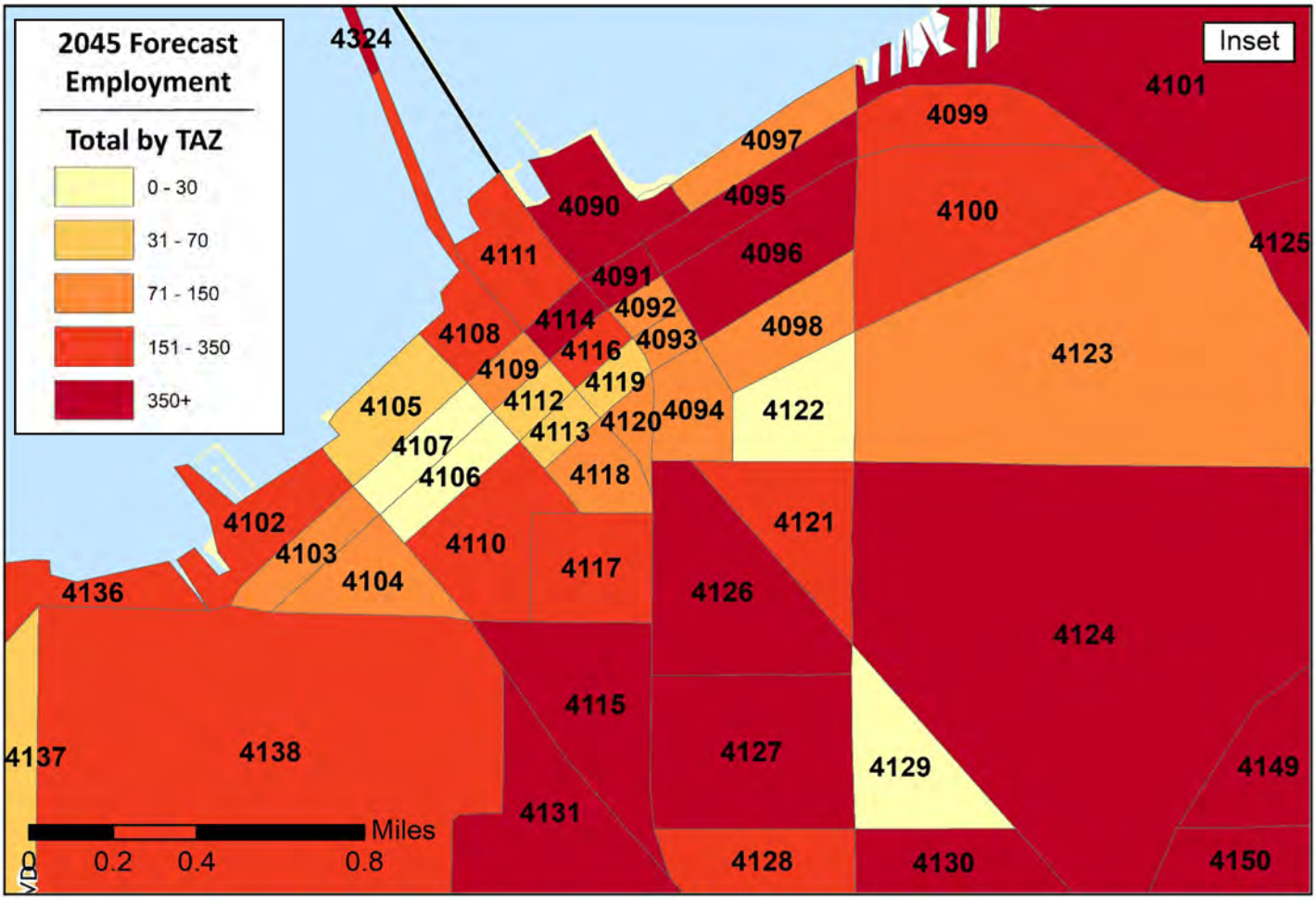
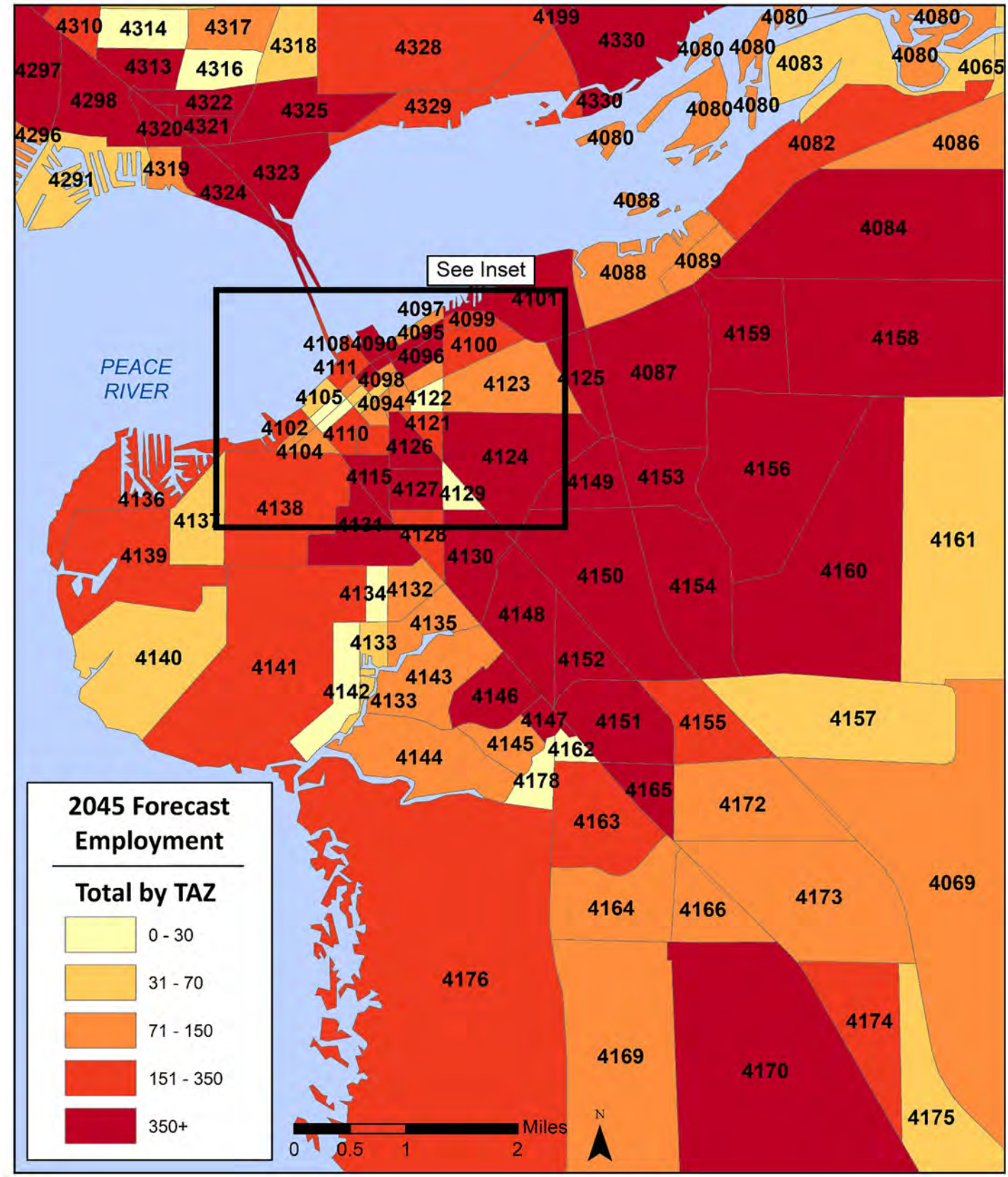


Figure 3-4: Socioeconomic Data – Forecast Total Employment – The forecasted total employment in the planning area spreads the concentration of employment from US 41 westward toward the area around the airport.


See Inset
PEACE RIVER
2045 Forecast Employment
Total by TAZ
0 - 30
31 - 70
71 - 150
151 - 350
350+
0 0.5 1 2 Miles
N

CHAPTER 3

2045 Forecast Total Employment Change

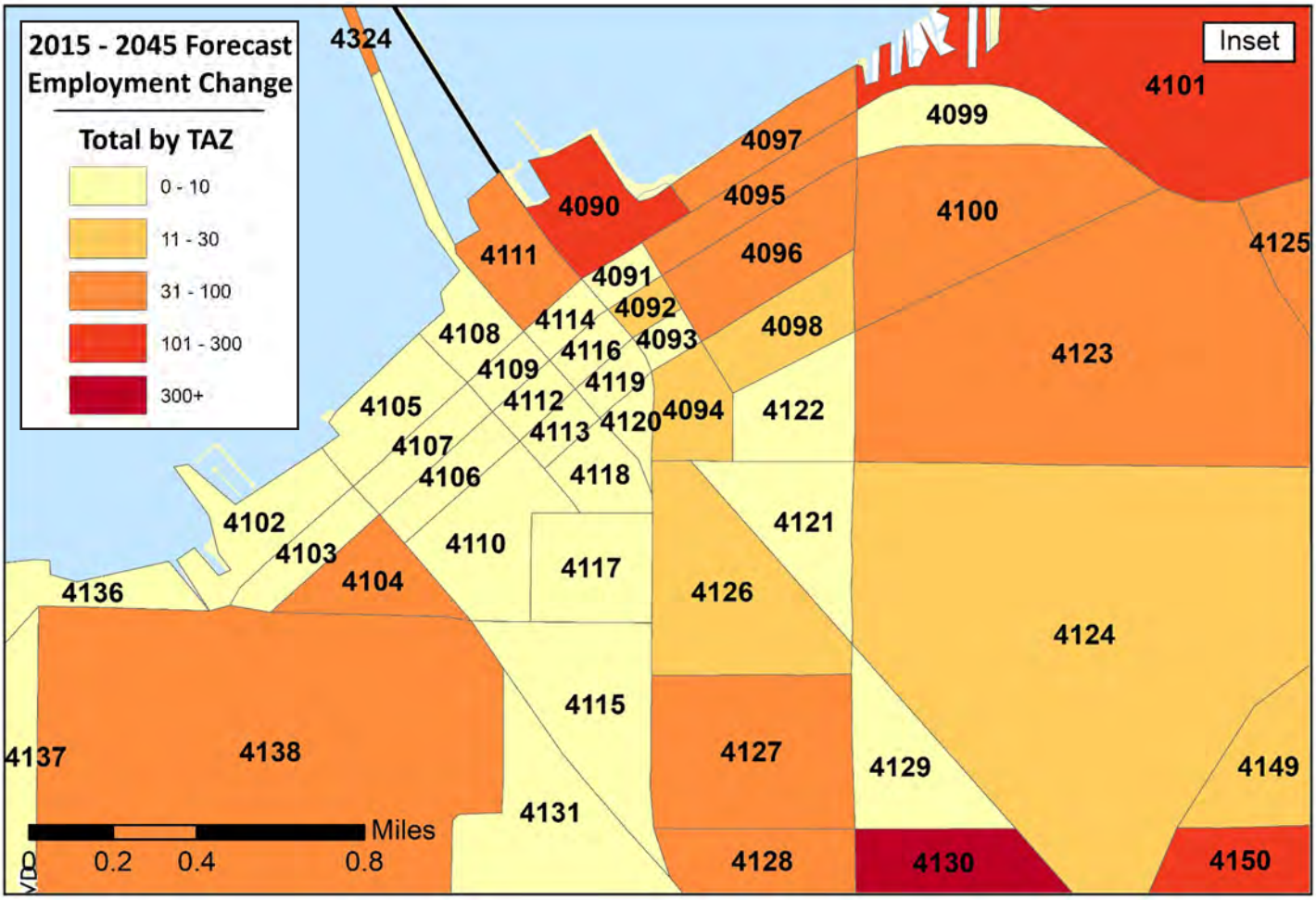
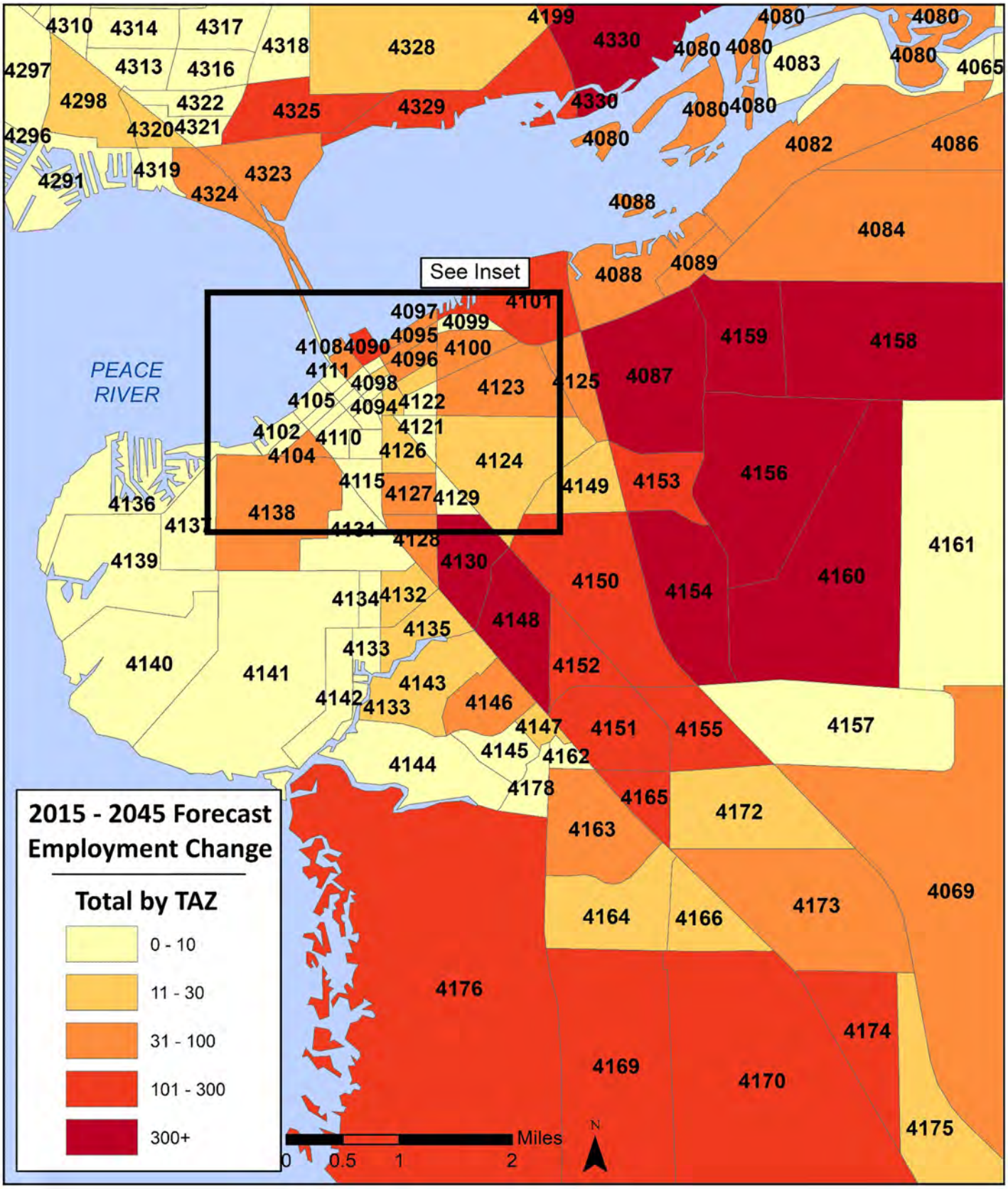


Figure 3-5: Socioeconomic Data – Forecast Total Employment Growth – The forecasted total employment growth in the planning area most significantly increases employment north and south of Jones Loop Rd between US 41 and Taylor Rd. Significant employment is also added to the area around the airport.


See Inset
PEACE RIVER
2015 - 2045 Forecast Employment Change
Total by TAZ
0 - 10
11 - 30
31 - 100
101 - 300
300+
0 0.5 1 2 Miles
N

CHAPTER 3

Roadway Design and Context Classification

Context Classification reflects a new way of guiding the planning and design of transportation facilities in the State of Florida. The majority of roadway design in the past has largely only considered the functional classification of roadways, which identified three types of roadways: arterials, collectors, and local streets. The past approach of using only the function of a roadway to guide its design has been detrimental to many communities since it was insensitive to the types and mix of land uses. As a result, wide, high-speed roadways commonly bisect communities and create potentially hazardous conditions for drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Arterials built within the context of a city's core area were typically similar to the design of a roadway in an suburban or even rural area with the exception of how stormwater was addressed.

By contrast, Context Classification considers land use, development patterns, and roadway connectivity characteristics to inform planning, design, construction, and maintenance activities of the transportation network. In using the guidance of Context Classification, the City of Punta Gorda will have the tools to deliver a transportation system that is sensitive to the needs of its users.

Functional Classification

- Focused on Auto Trips
- Ignored Land Use Except for Access
- High Speeds Inside Cities

Context Classifications

- Balances Land Use and Transportation
- Sensitive to "Context"
- FDOT Complete Streets Policy

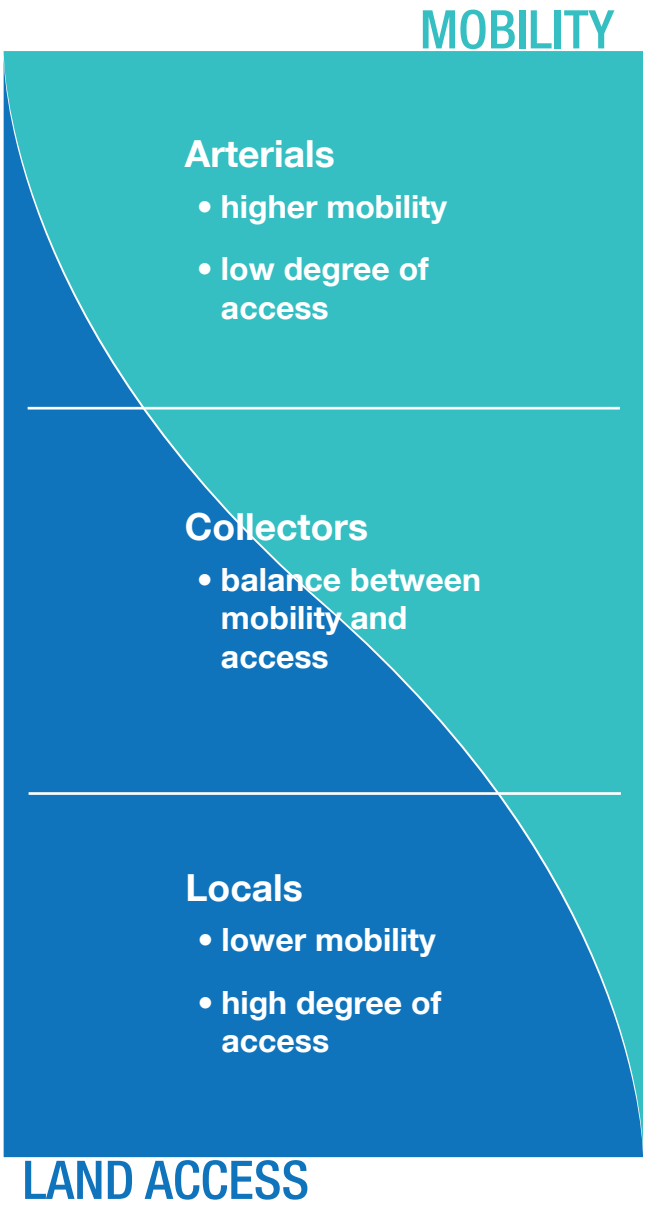


Figure 3-6: Roadway Design – Functional Classification

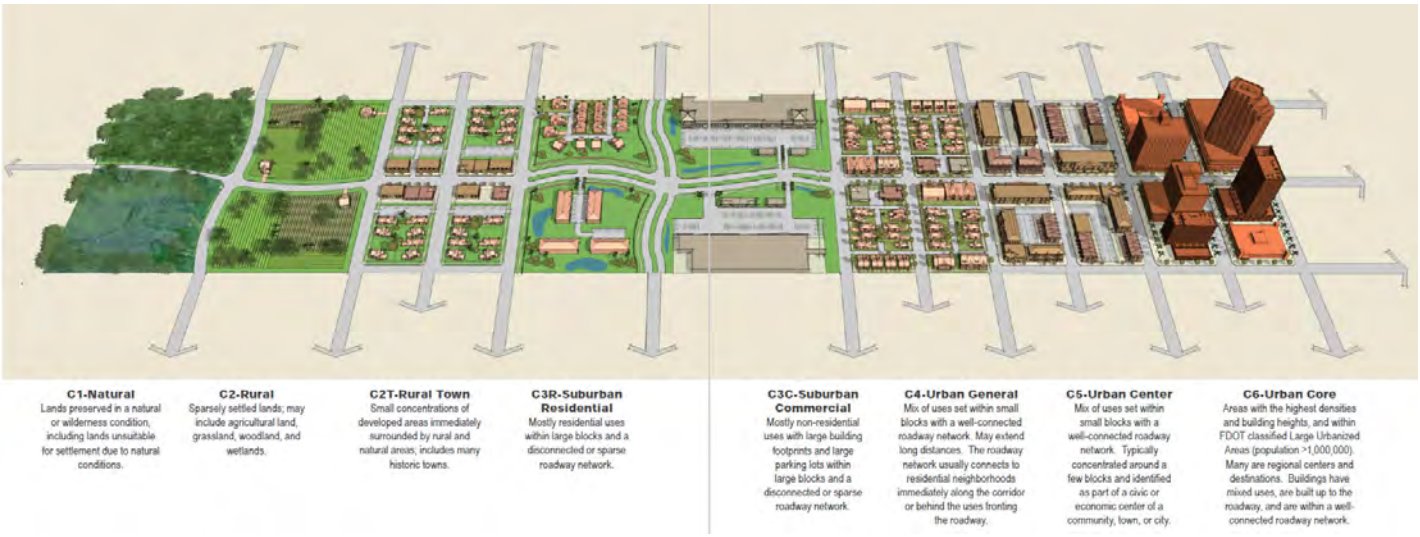


Figure 3-7: Roadway Design - Context Classification

Figure 3-8: FDOT Review of Punta Gorda Context Classifications

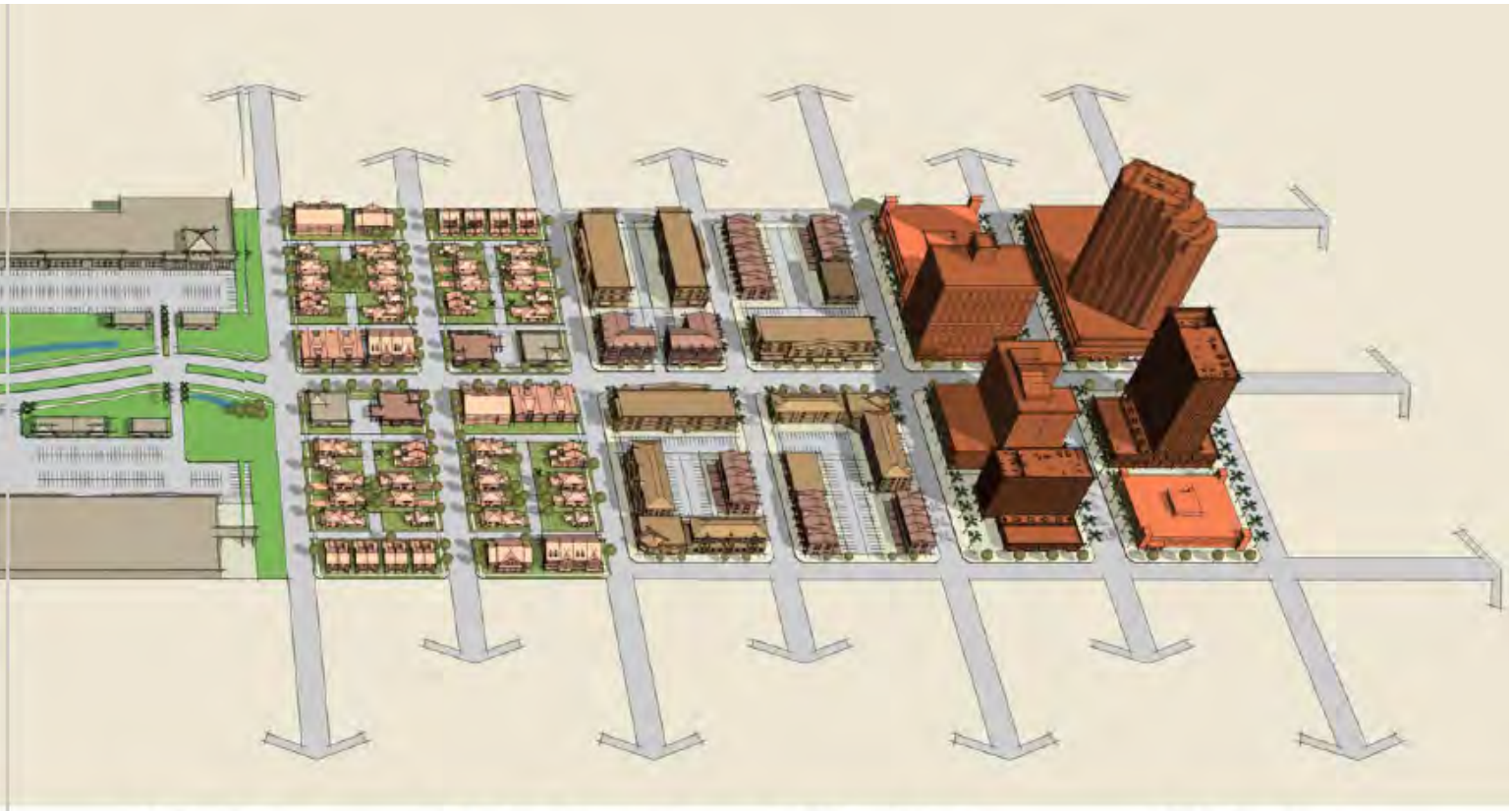
C1-Natural
Lands preserved in a natural or wilderness condition, including lands unsuitable for settlement due to natural conditions.

C2-Rural
Sparsely settled lands; may include agricultural land, grassland, woodland, and wetlands.

C2T-Rural Town
Small concentrations of developed areas immediately surrounded by rural and natural areas; includes many historic towns.

C3R-Suburban Residential
Mostly residential uses within large blocks and a disconnected or sparse roadway network.

Figure 3-9: FDOT Context Classification Transect



C3C-Suburban Commercial
Mostly non-residential uses with large building footprints and large parking lots within large blocks and a disconnected or sparse roadway network.

C4-Urban General
Mix of uses set within small blocks with a well-connected roadway network. May extend long distances. The roadway network usually connects to residential neighborhoods immediately along the corridor or behind the uses fronting the roadway.

C5-Urban Center
Mix of uses set within small blocks with a well-connected roadway network. Typically concentrated around a few blocks and identified as part of a civic or economic center of a community, town, or city.

C6-Urban Core
Areas with the highest densities and building heights, and within FDOT classified Large Urbanized Areas (population >1,000,000). Many are regional centers and destinations. Buildings have mixed uses, are built up to the roadway, and are within a well-connected roadway network.

CHAPTER 3

City of Punta Gorda Context Classifications

The City of Punta Gorda has assigned four different types of context classifications to the Transportation Study Area.

C2 Rural

Sparsely settled lands, may include agricultural land, grassland, wood land, and wetlands.

C3R/C3C Suburban Residential/Commercial

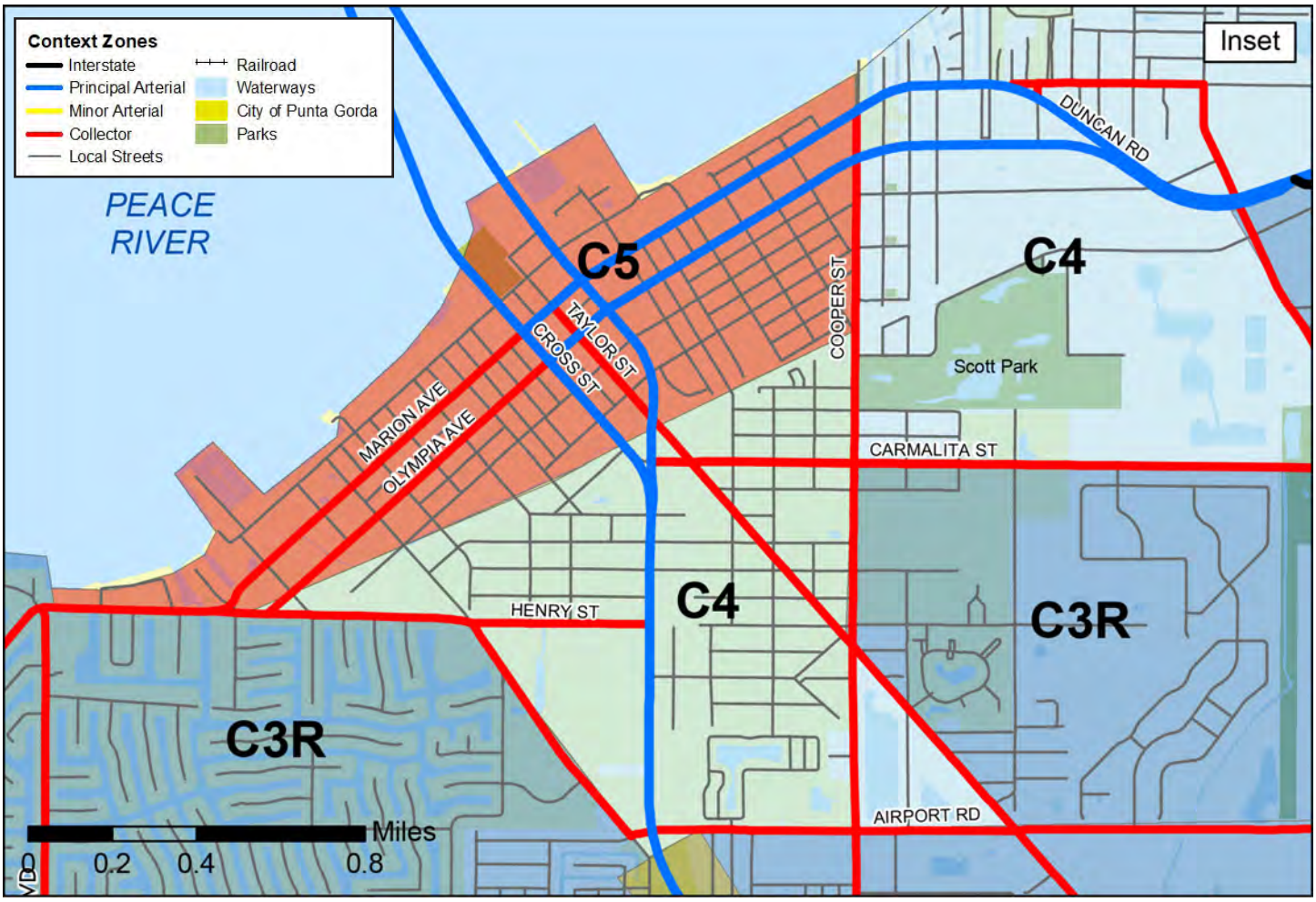
Either residential or non-residential uses within large blocks and a disconnected or sparse roadway network.

C4 Urban General

Mix of uses set within small blocks with a well-connected roadway network.

C5 Urban Center

Mix of use set within a well connected network. Typically concentrated around a few blocks and identified as part of a civic or economic center of a community, town or city.



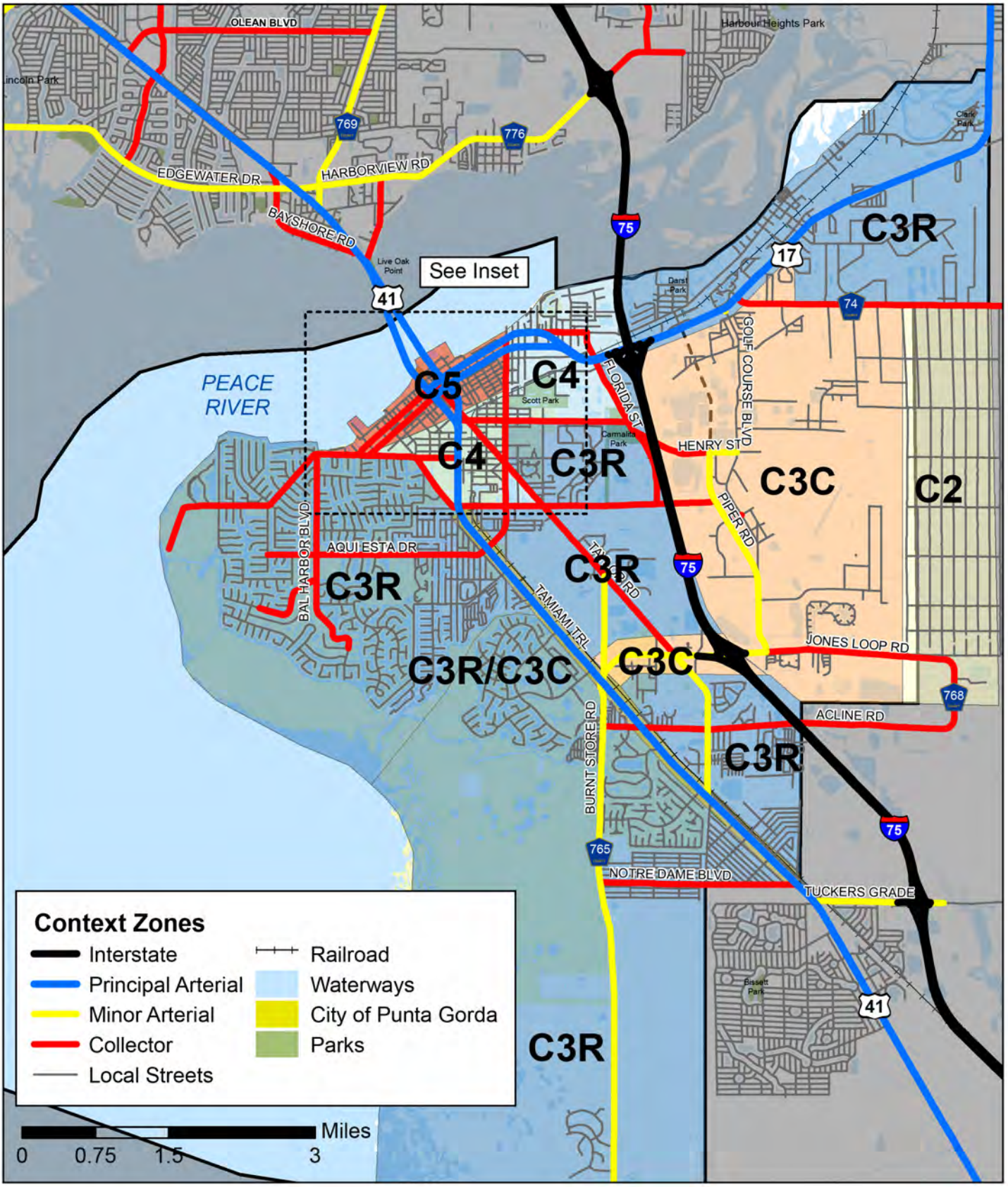


Figure 3-10: City of Punta Gorda Context Classifications

CHAPTER 4

Transportation Evaluation and Recommendations

CHAPTER 4

Chapter 4 - Transportation Evaluation and Recommendations

Introduction

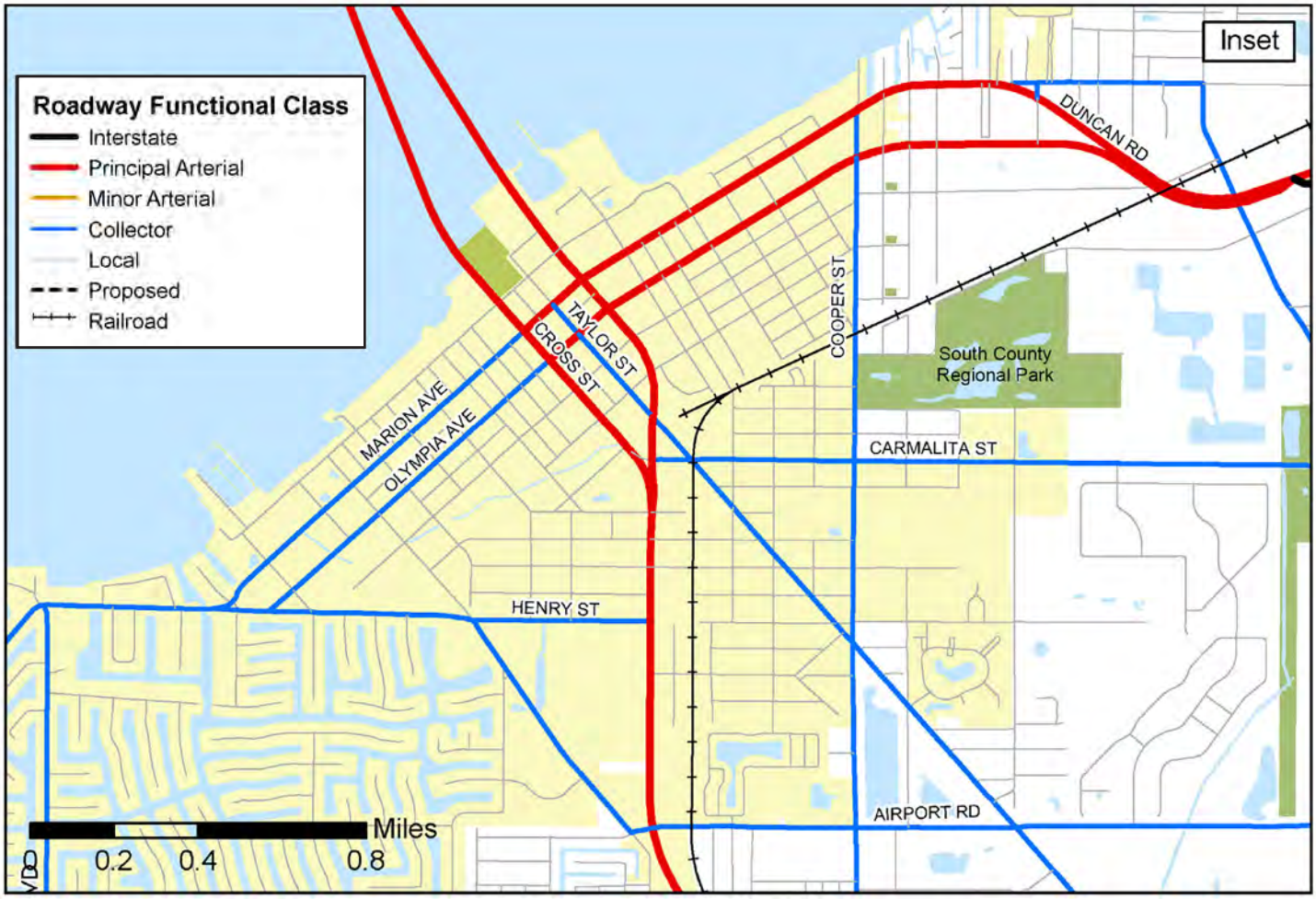
Extensive data was collected and organized from available data sources and prior planning efforts. This information was considered along with the responses from the stakeholder interviews to document the anticipated long term transportation needs for roadways, pedestrians, and bicycle users. The technical analysis included a forecast of future year travel volumes for 2045 using an updated version of the FDOT District One Regional Travel Demand Model used for the development of the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan.

The highlights of the transportation analysis are included within this chapter and include identification of the anticipated transportation improvements recommended for roadways, pedestrian facilities, and bicycle facilities.

CHAPTER 4

Roadway Functional Class

The main roadways in the Punta Gorda area are Interstate 75, US 17, and US 41 which are arterial roadways. The remainder of the roadway network is comprised of collector and local roadways. Interstate 75 and US 41 connect Punta Gorda with Port Charlotte to the north and Cape Coral to the South. US 17 provides access to Arcadia and points to the north.



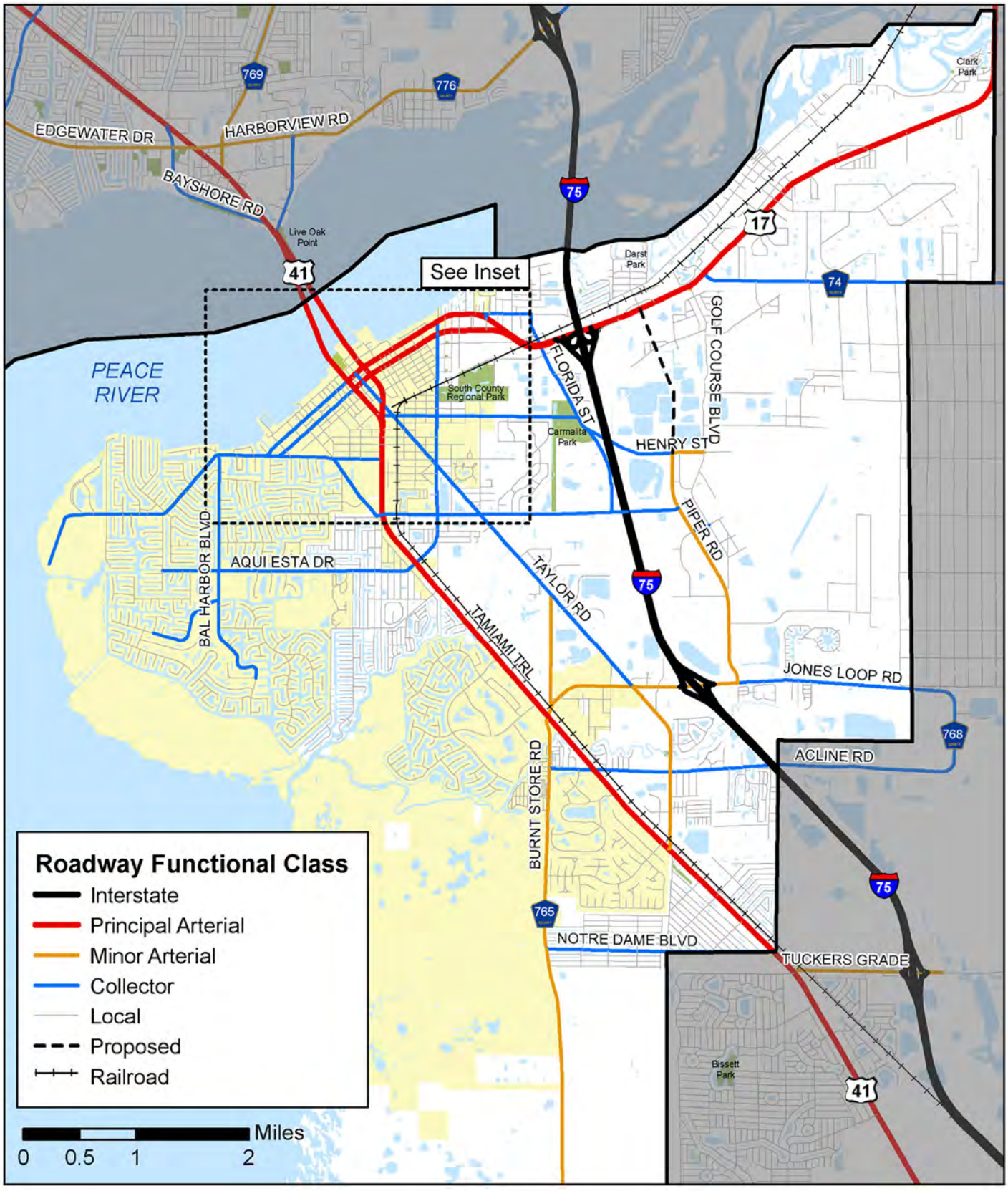


Figure 4-1: Functional Classification

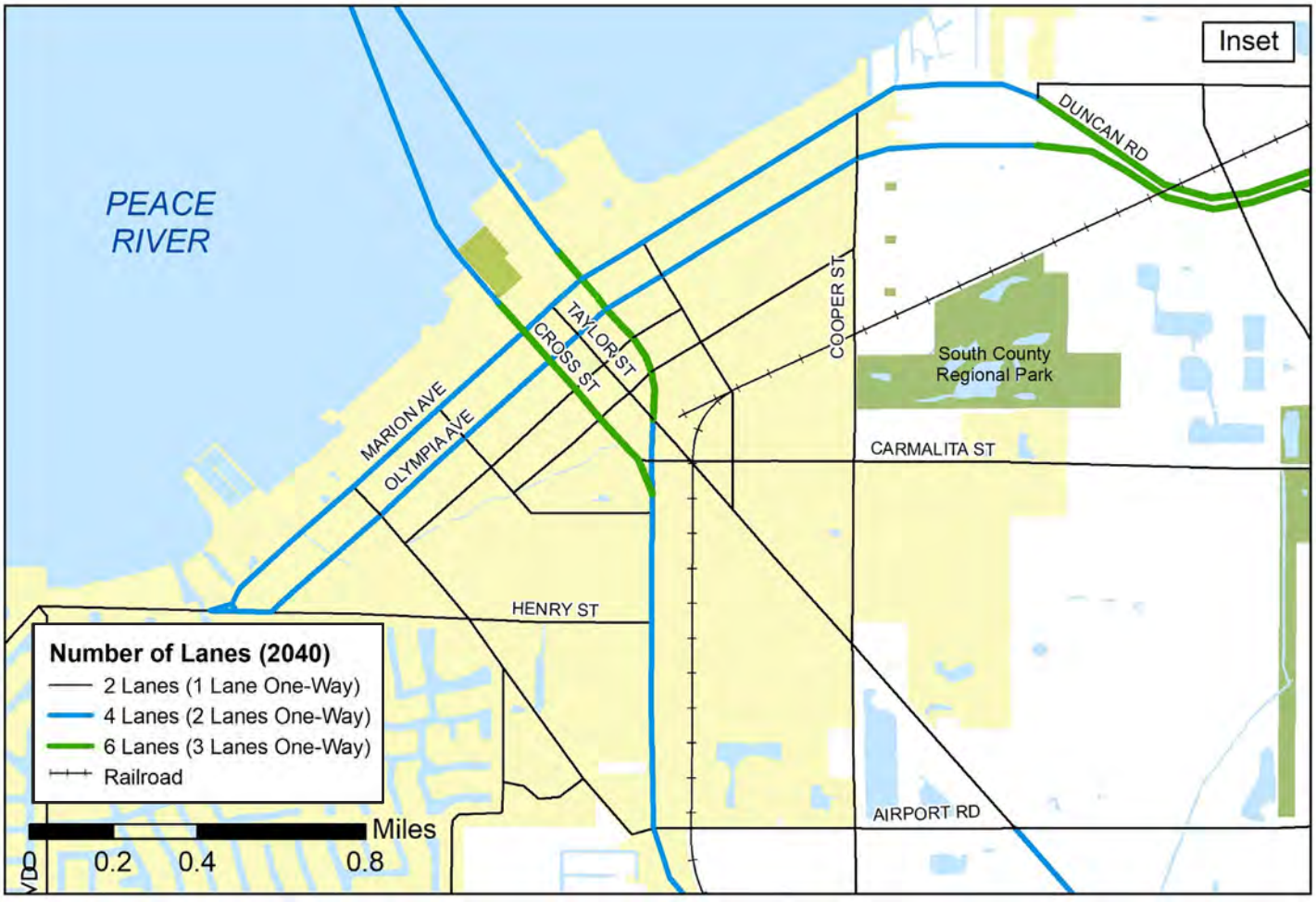
CHAPTER 4

Assumed Roadway Improvements

Four major roadway improvements are documented in the Charlotte County–Punta Gorda MPO 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan and/or Transportation Improvement Program. These improvements include:

- **I-75** – 6 Lane Expansion within the entire Planning Area - completed.
- **Piper Road** – 4 Lane Extension from Jones Loop Road to US 17 - completed in 2019.
- **Burnt Store Road** – 4 Lane Expansion from Notre Dame Blvd to south boundary of the Planning Area.
- **Taylor Road** – 4 Lanes Expansion from Jones Loop Road to Airport Road.

The number of lanes for 2040 are based on the guidance documented in the Charlotte County Punta Gorda Cost Feasible element of the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan.



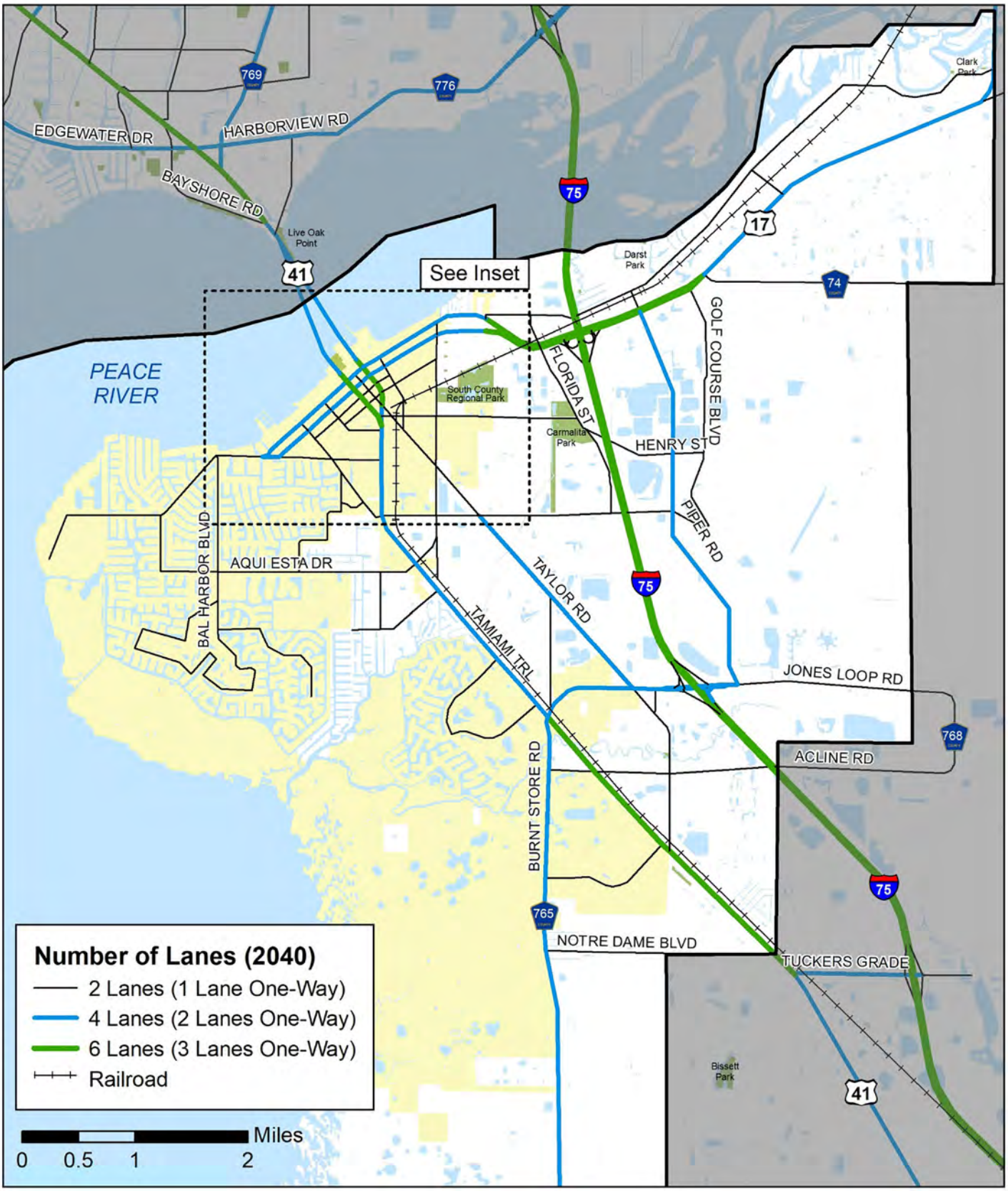
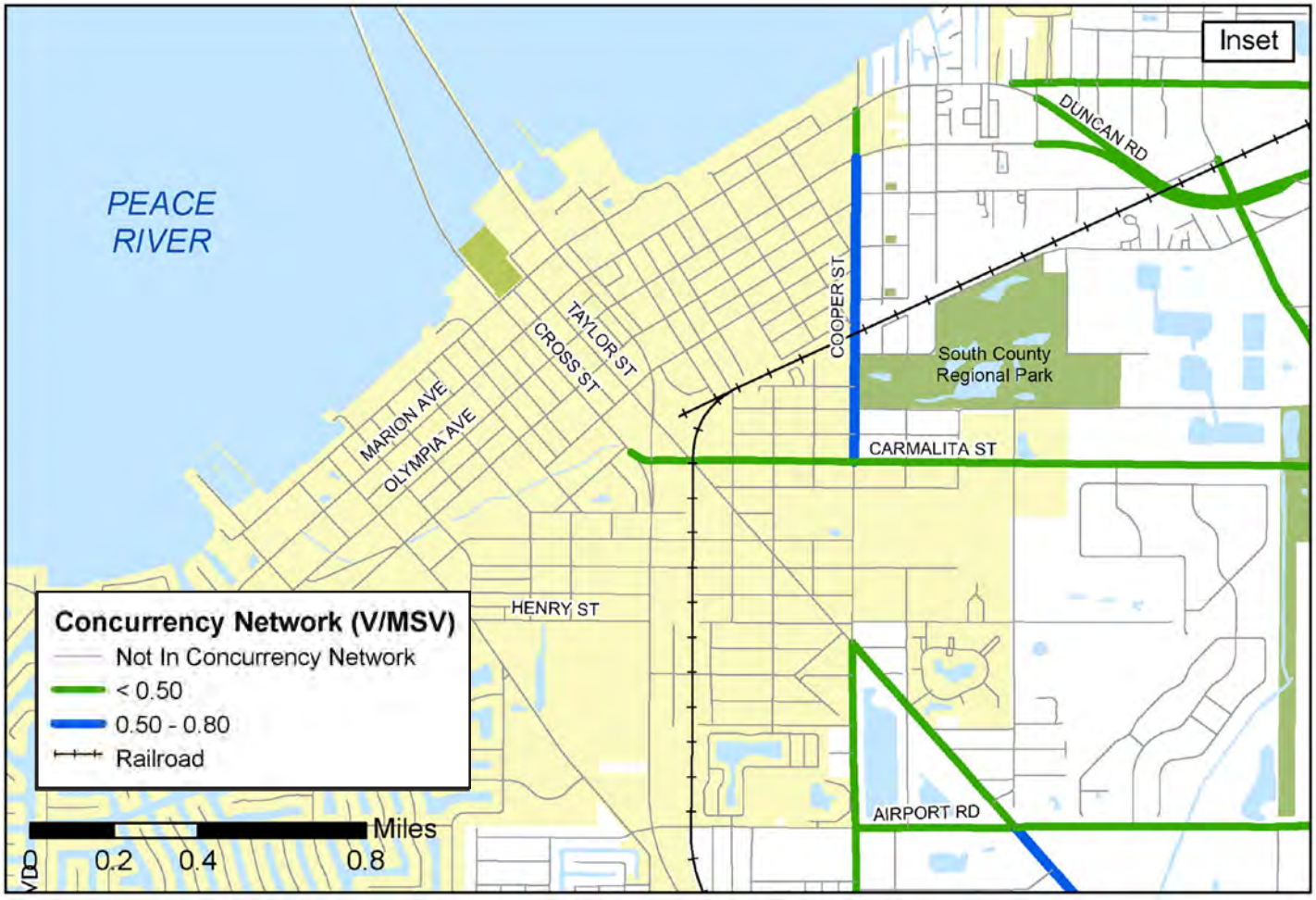


Figure 4-2: Assumed Roadway Improvements

CHAPTER 4

Concurrency Network (Volume/Maximum Service Volume)

The figures below show the concurrency network for Punta Gorda. This concurrency threshold is calculated by determining the weighted volume to maximum service volume at the adopted level of service standard. Roadways that have a V/SMV of 1.0 or greater are defined as congested. The figure shows that no roadways in the planning area exceed the adopted level of service standard.



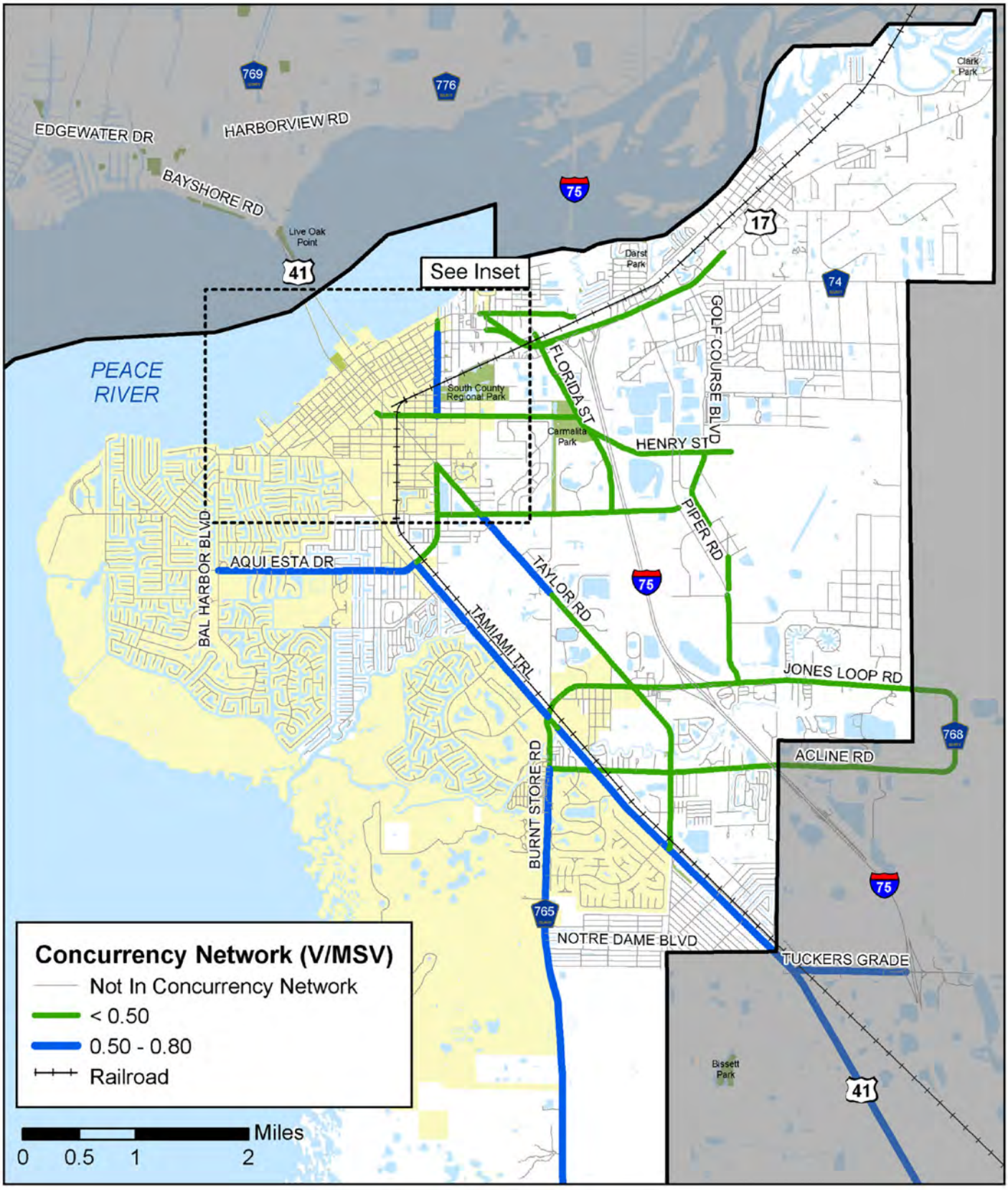
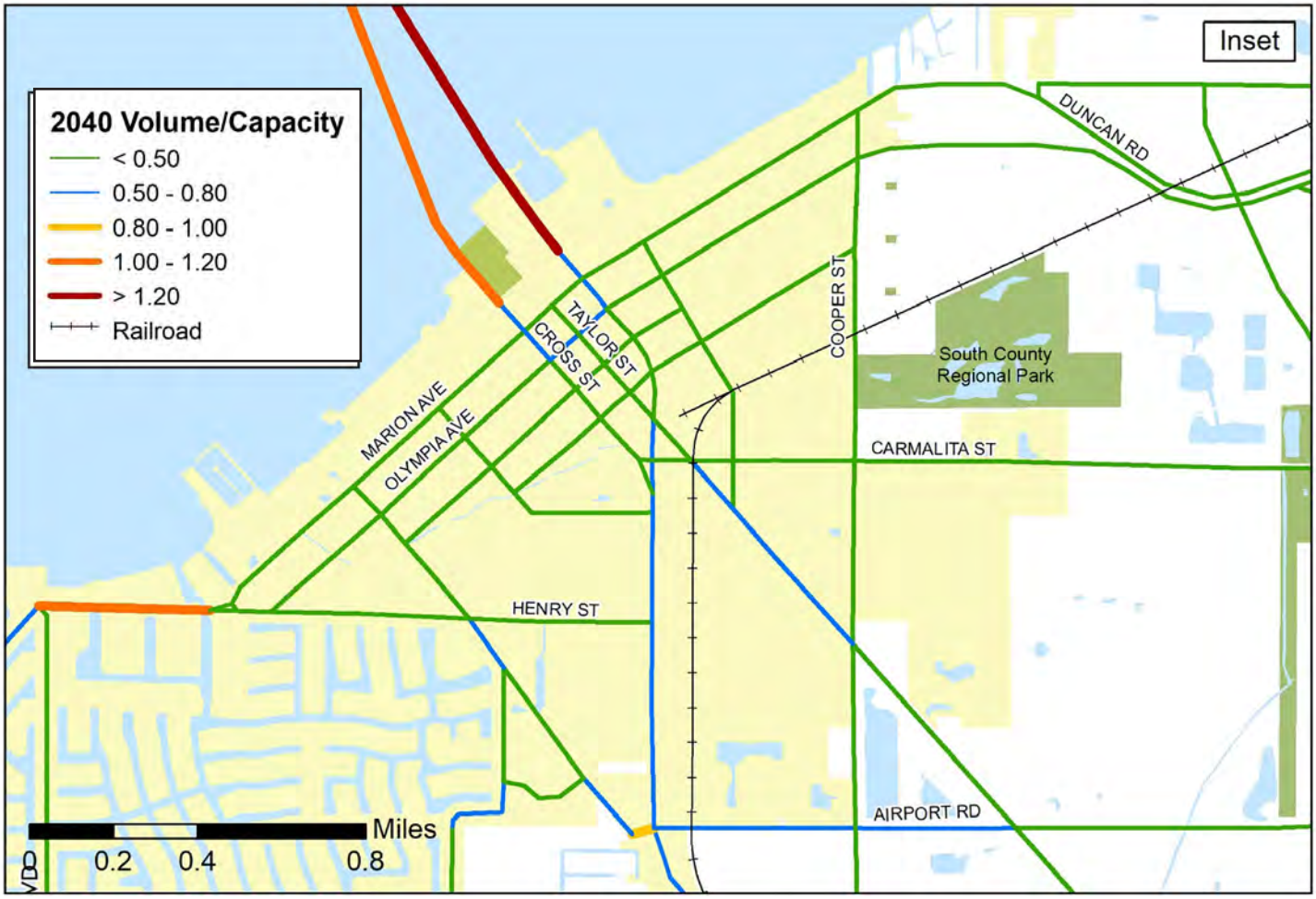


Figure 4-4: Roadway Congestion: Existing Concurrency Network

CHAPTER 4

Forecast Typical Traffic Conditions

The volume forecast with assumed transportation improvements through 2045 identify several potentially congested corridors. These corridors include the US 41 bridges, US 41 south of Aqui Esta Dr., Bal Harbor Blvd., and West Marion Ave. Each of these are forecasted to levels of service below the adopted standard and may require future capacity improvements which may include new travel lanes, traffic operations improvements, or the development of parallel corridors.



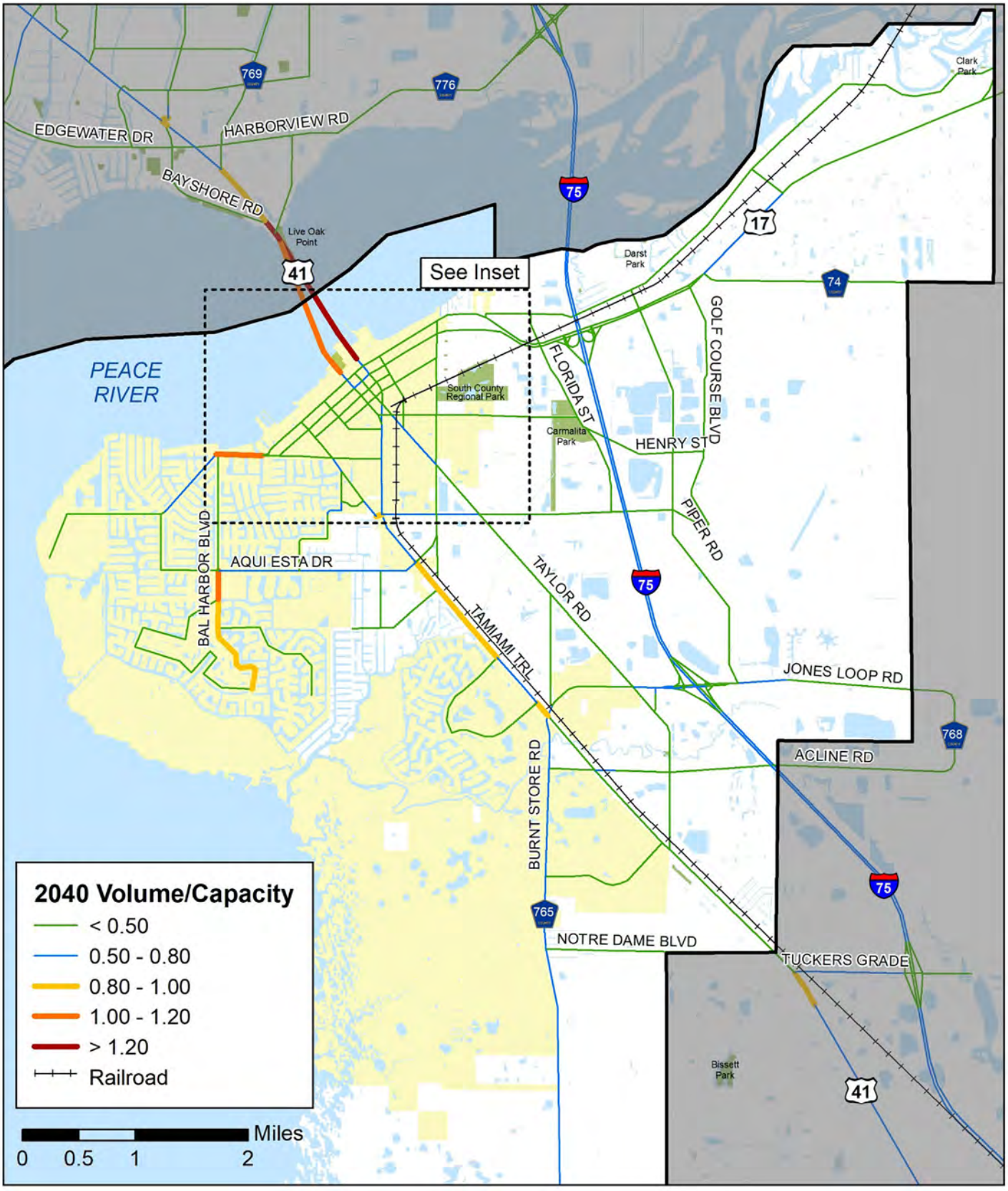
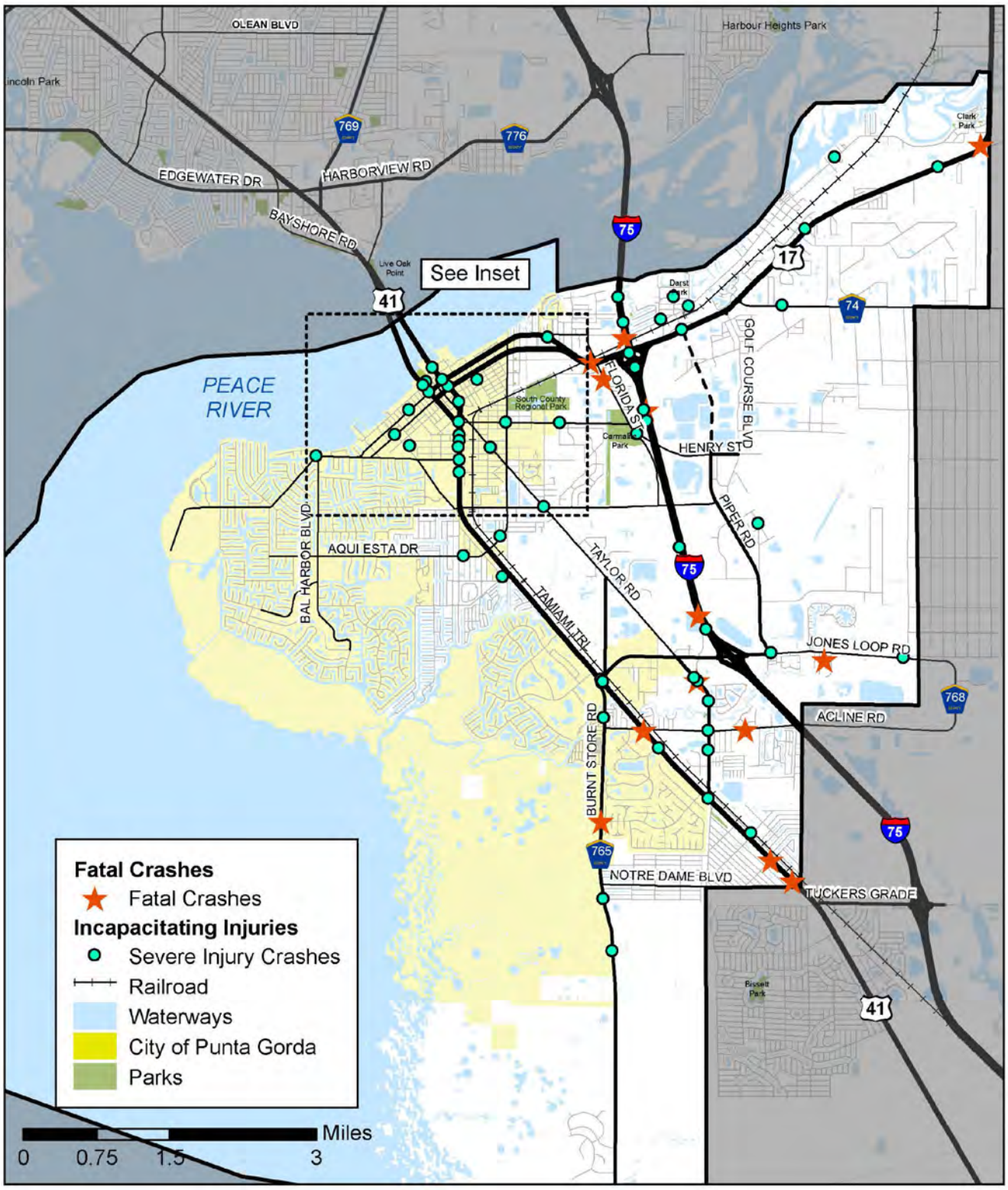


Figure 4-5: Roadway Congestion: 2045 Network

CHAPTER 4

Total Fatalities and Severe Injuries

There are approximately 15 to 20 crashes per year that result in fatalities or severe (incapacitating) injuries. The greatest concentration of these serious crashes occurs on US 41 including the one-way pairs.



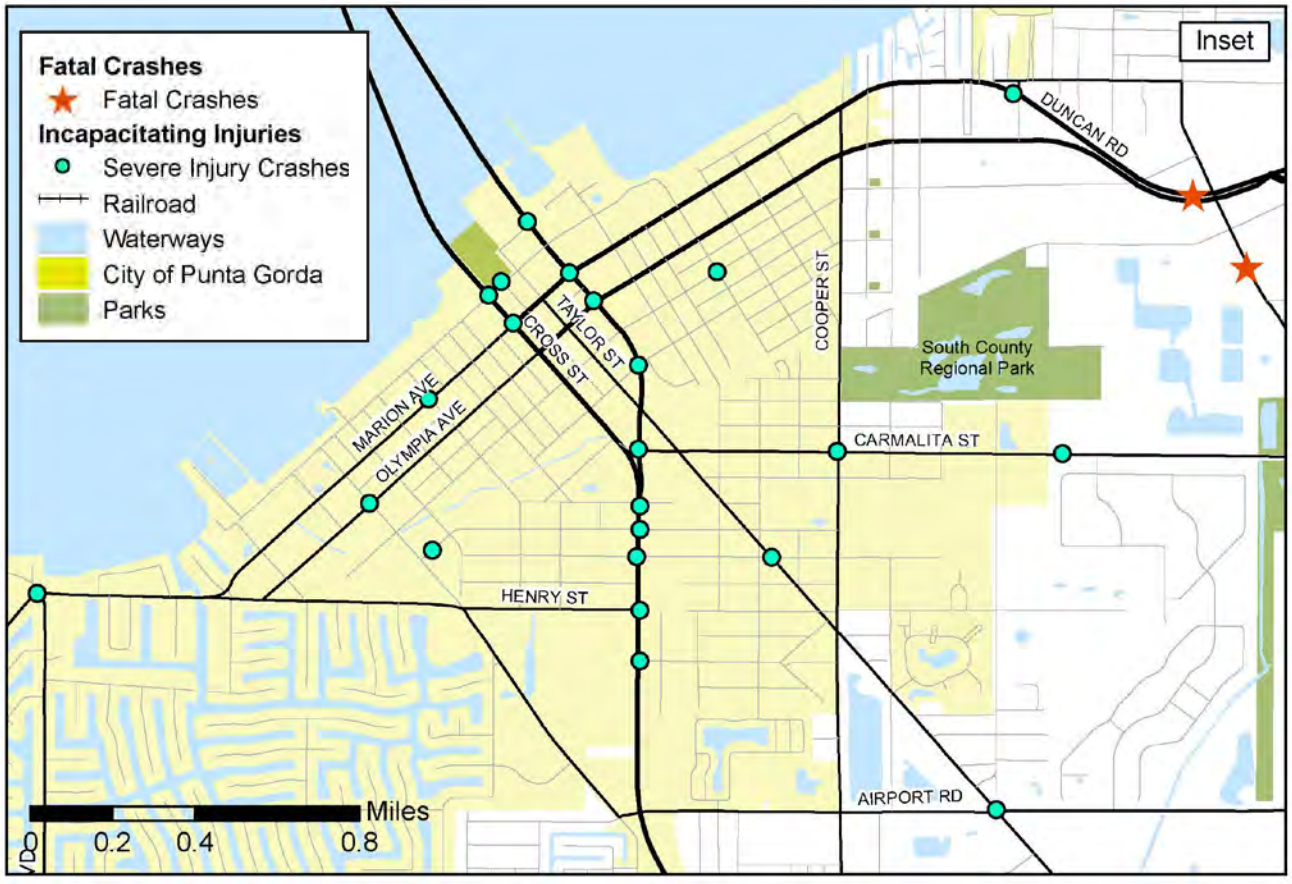


Figure 4-6: Fatal and Severe Injury Crash Locations

Crashes by Year

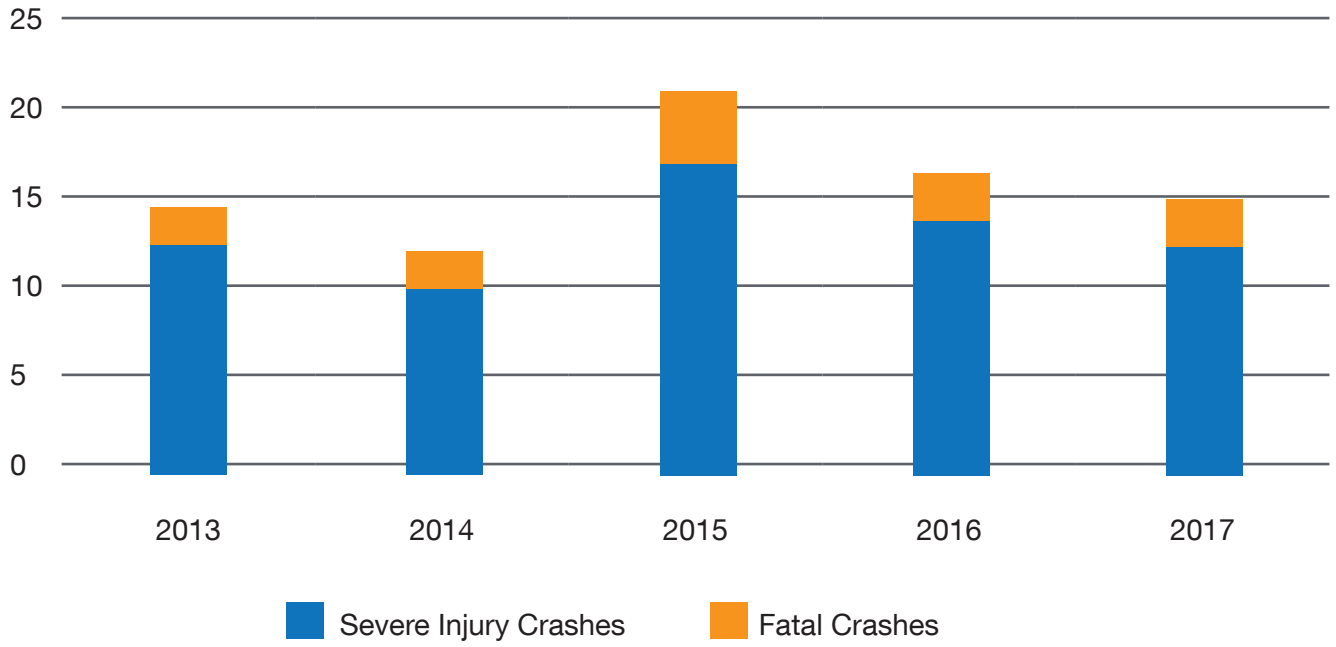


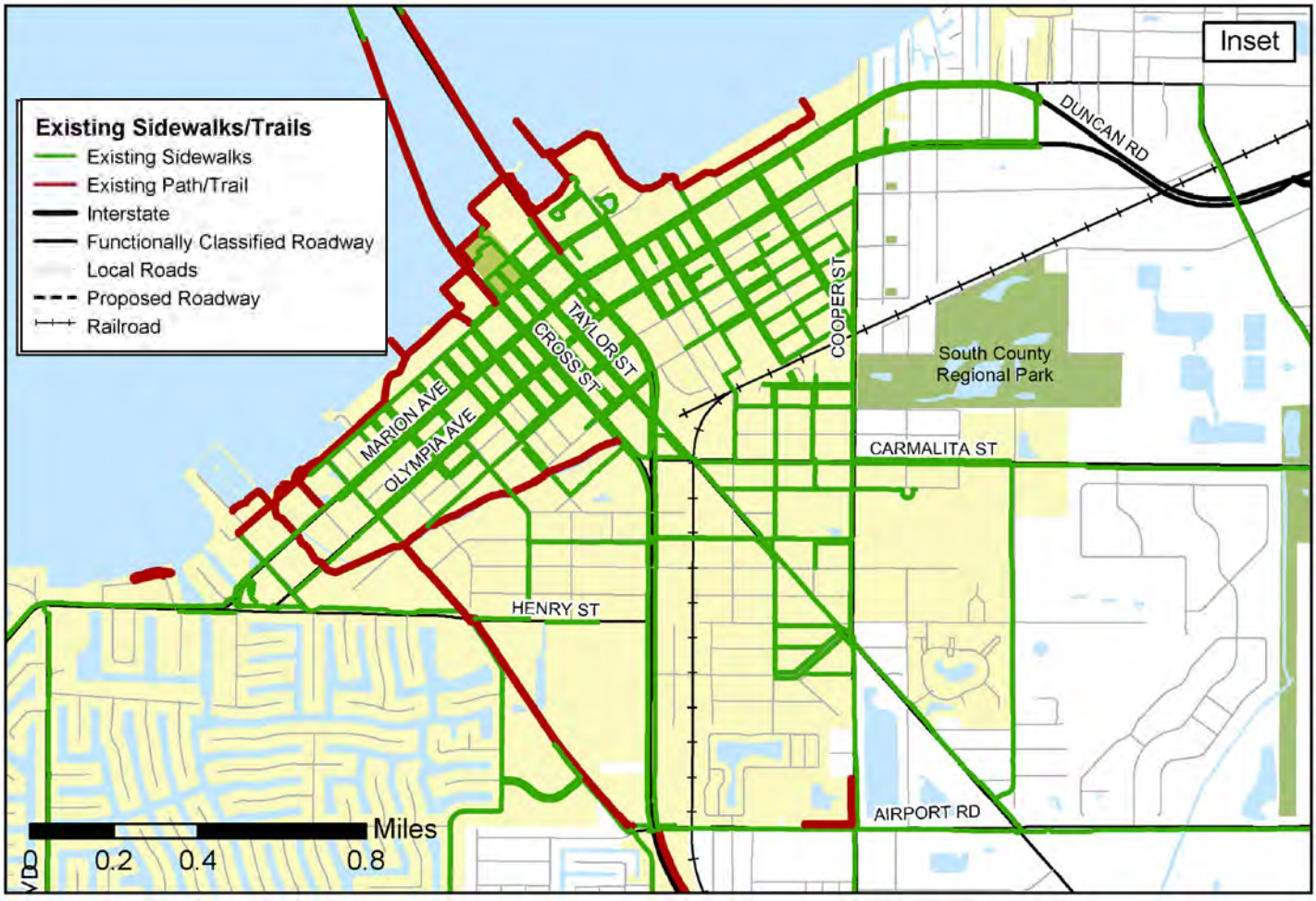
Figure 4-7: Fatal and Severe Injury Crash History

CHAPTER 4

Existing Sidewalks/Trails

An inventory of sidewalks on major roadways and multipurpose trails was collected as part the buildout study. Overall, the sidewalk network is concentrated in the downtown area and mostly on main corridors. However, there are several gaps within the network. Specific large gaps occur at: Taylor Road, Duncan Road, Henry Street, Marion Ave, Burnt Store Road, Jones Loop Road, Rio Villa Drive, Florida Street, and Notre Dame Boulevard.

The trail network is mostly concentrated along Tamiami Trail (US 41), in and around the downtown area including the waterfront. Several areas could benefit from extending the trail network. Specifically, trail connections to South County Regional and Carmalita Sports Parks, the trail network off of Aqui Esta Drive, Cross Street connection, and Cooper Street and Taylor Street.



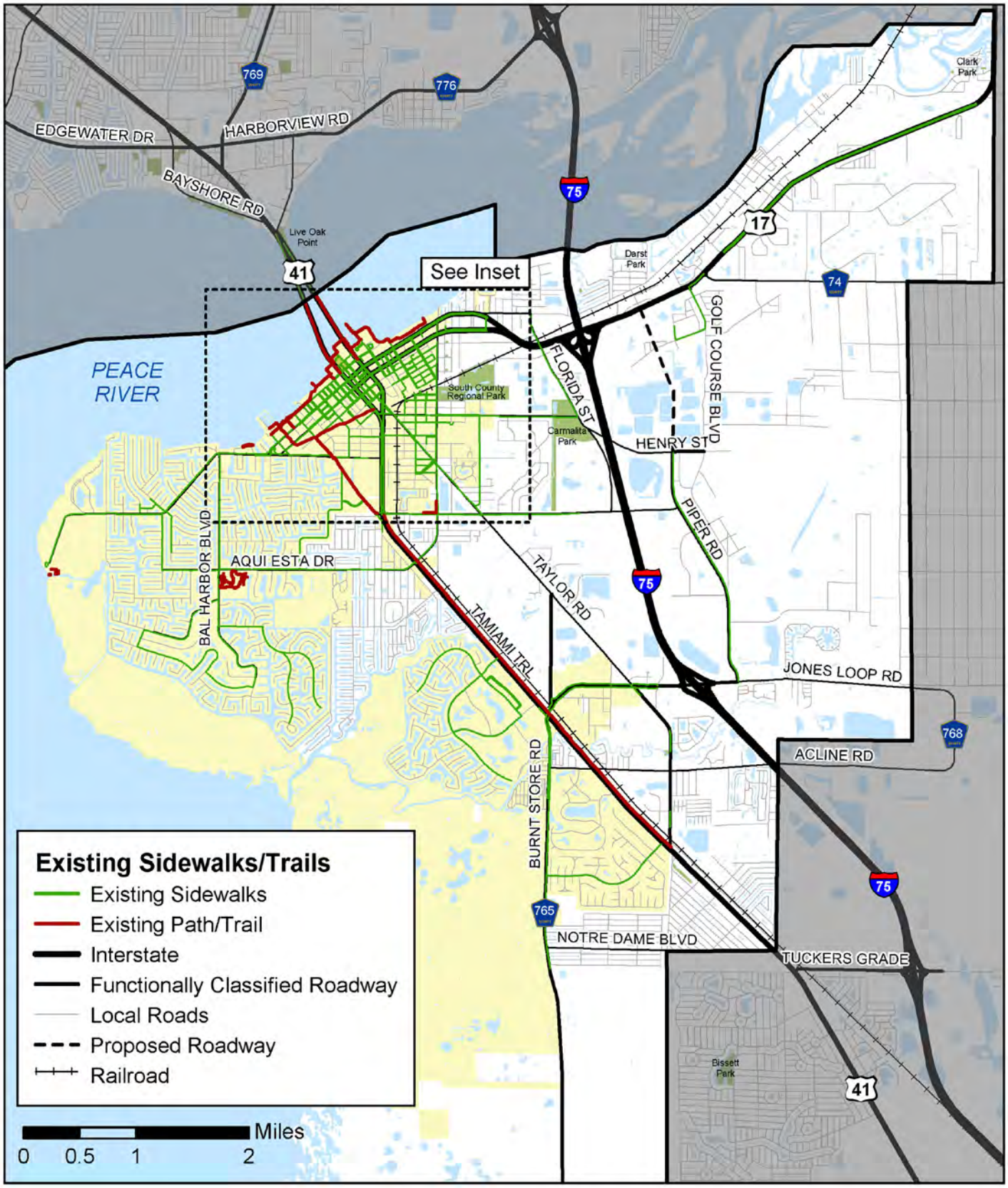


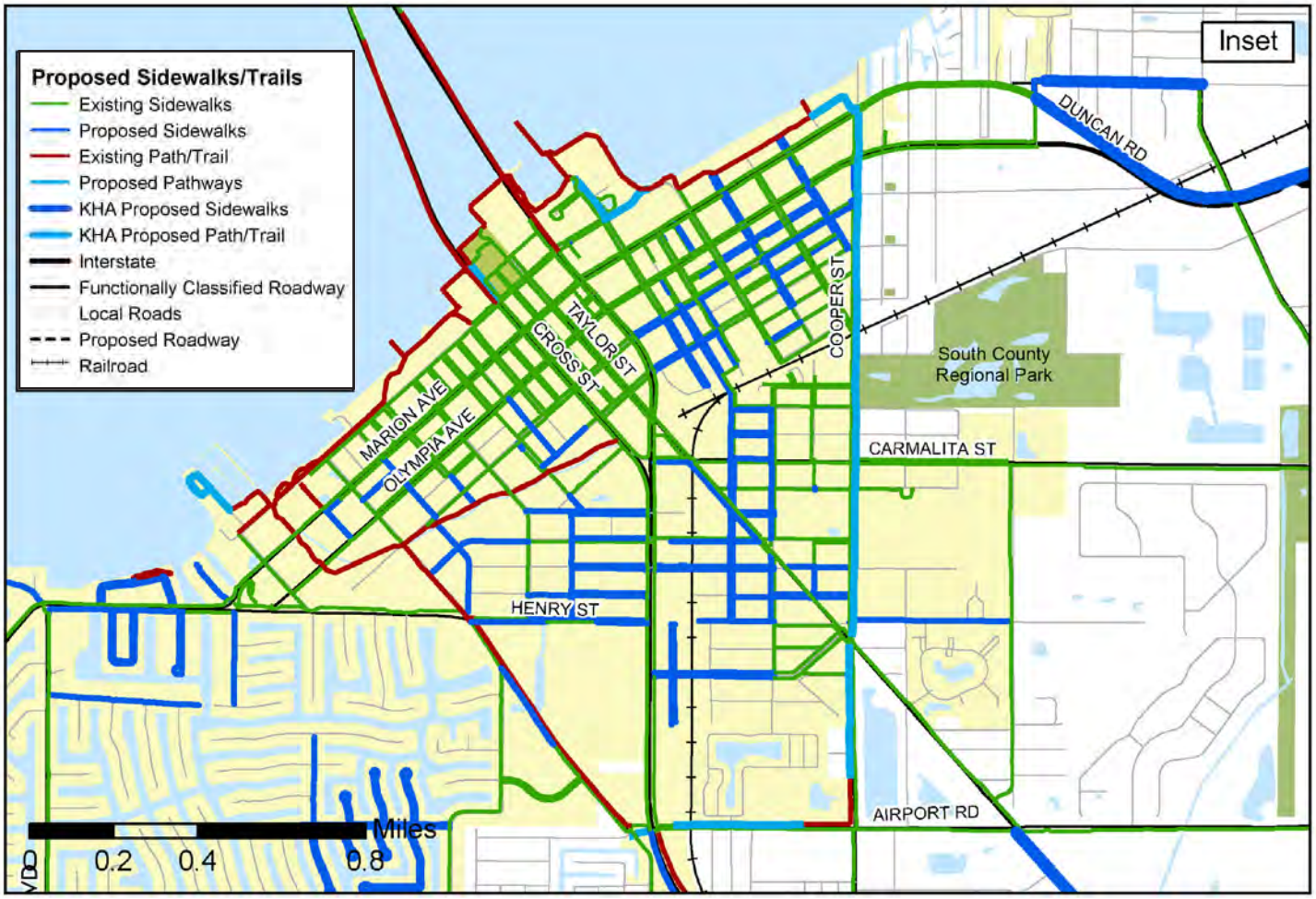
Figure 4-8: Existing Major Pedestrian Facilities (Sidewalks & Trails)

CHAPTER 4

Proposed Sidewalks/Trails

Several proposed sidewalk and trail connections identified by Charlotte County and the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda Metropolitan Planning Organization address several of the gaps identified in Figure 4-8. However, there are additional facilities are recommend to improve overall network connectivity. The additional trail facilities include: Tamiami Trail connection to Notre Dame Boulevard, Cooper Street connection to South County Regional Park and Airport Road trail, and the Airport Road connection to the Tamiami Trail.

Large sidewalk proposals include Taylor Road, Duncan Road, Henry Street, Marion Ave, Jones Loop Road, Acline Road, Rio Villa Drive, Florida Street, and Notre Dame Boulevard.



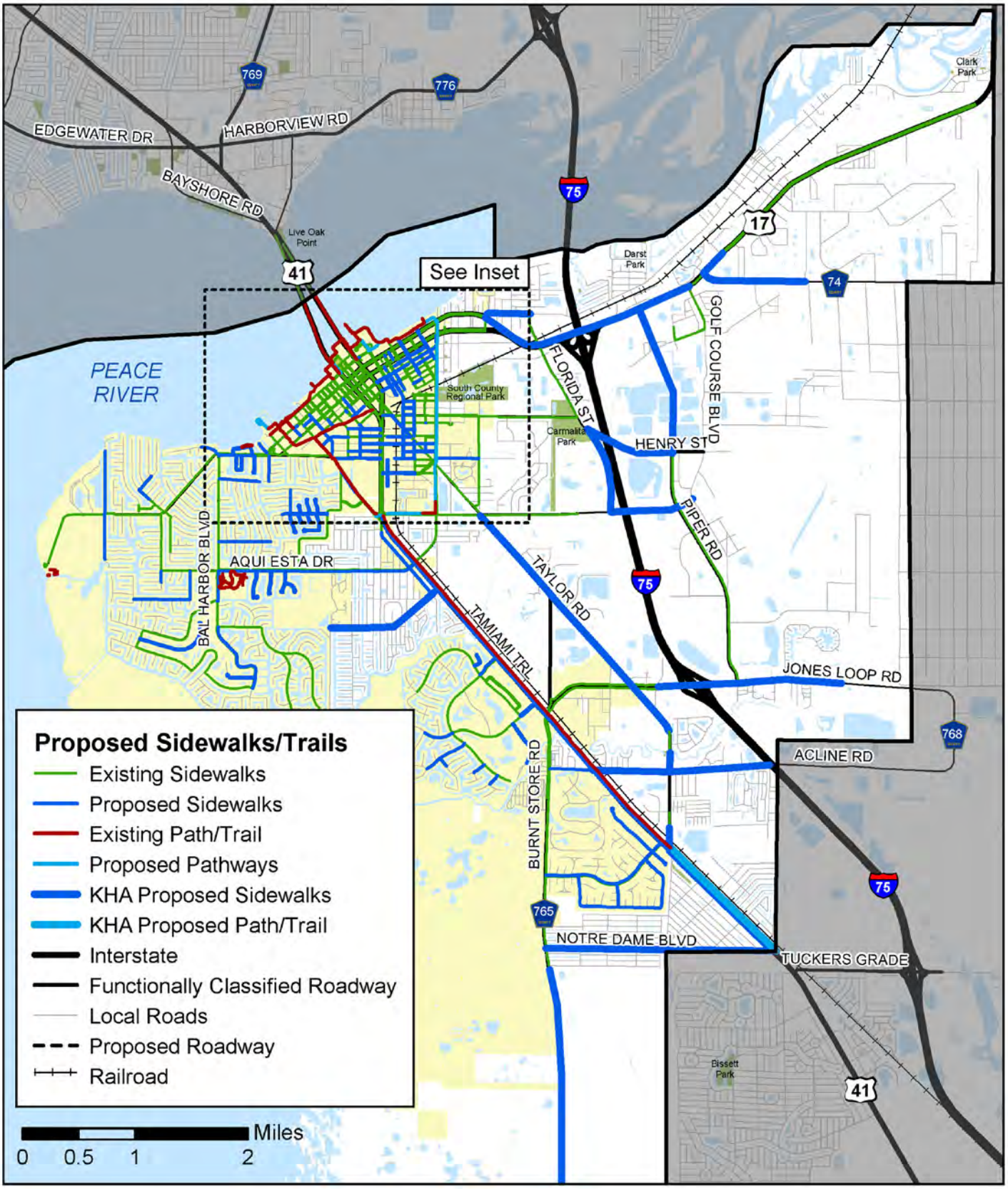
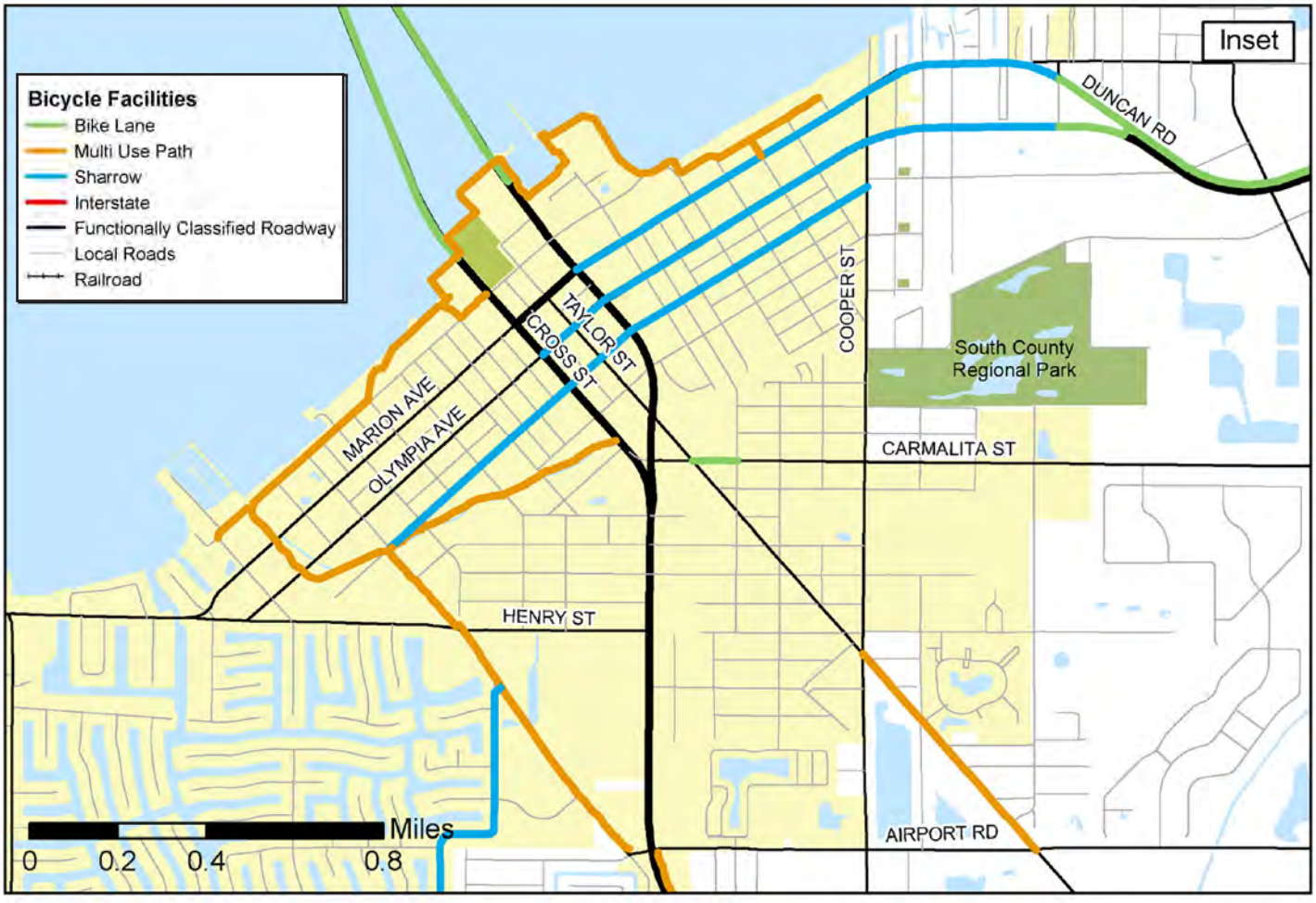


Figure 4-9: Recommended Major Pedestrian Facilities (Sidewalks & Trails)

CHAPTER 4

Bicycle Facilities

The inventory of bicycle facilities shows a well connected network opportunities for improvement. There are several streets within the downtown area such as Marion Ave and Olympia Ave which have gaps in the bicycle network. Multi use paths can be added to Copper Street and Taylor Street to complete the partial existing loop. For the overall network, there are few facilities on local streets. Increasing local and connector street facilities with either on-street facilities or reduced speeds and sharrows will provide connections to main network. Key roadways that would benefit from bicycle improvements include: Aqui Esta Drive, Bal Harbor Boulevard, Acline Road, Rio Villa Drive, Marion Ave, Carmalita Street, and Piper Road.



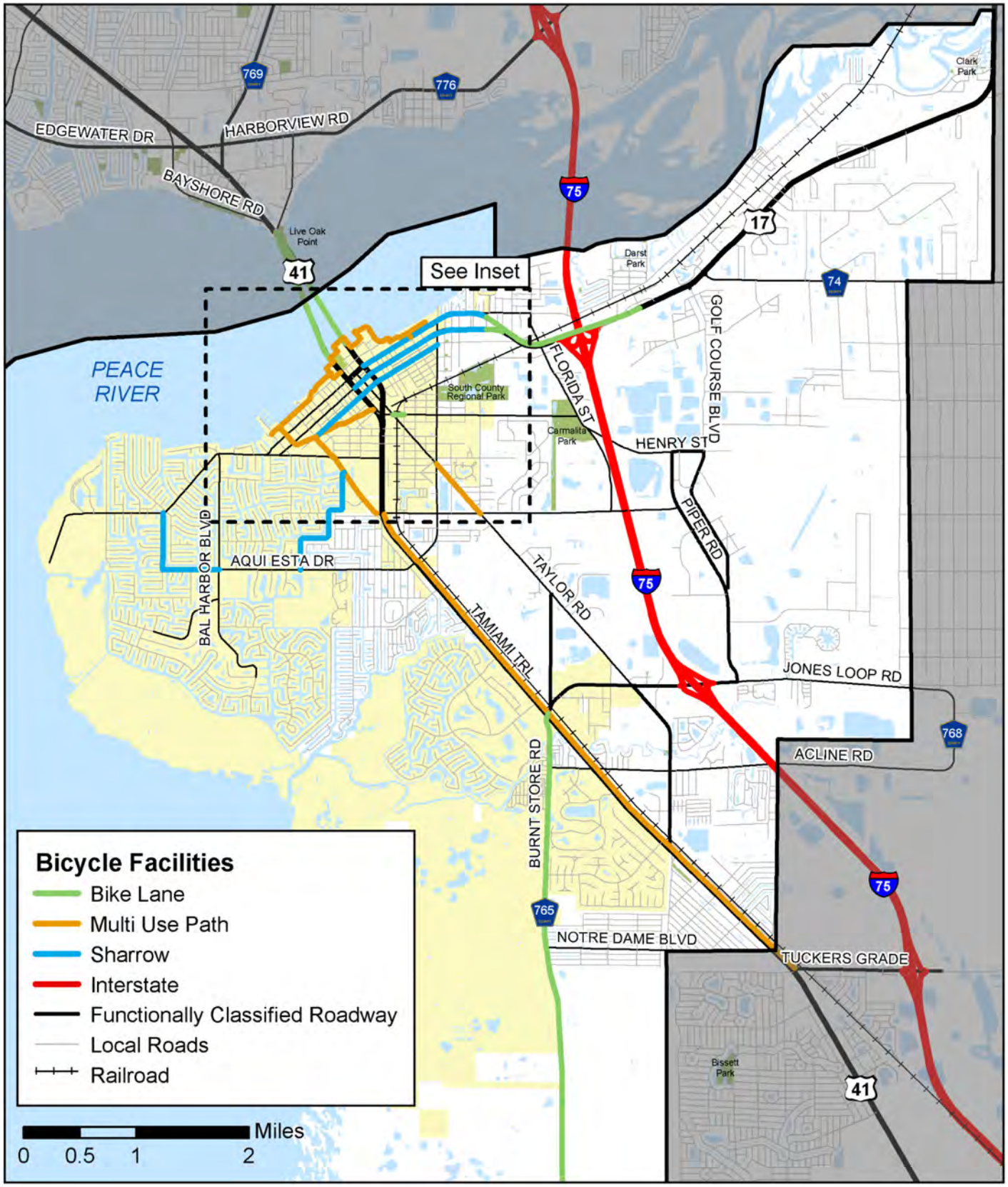
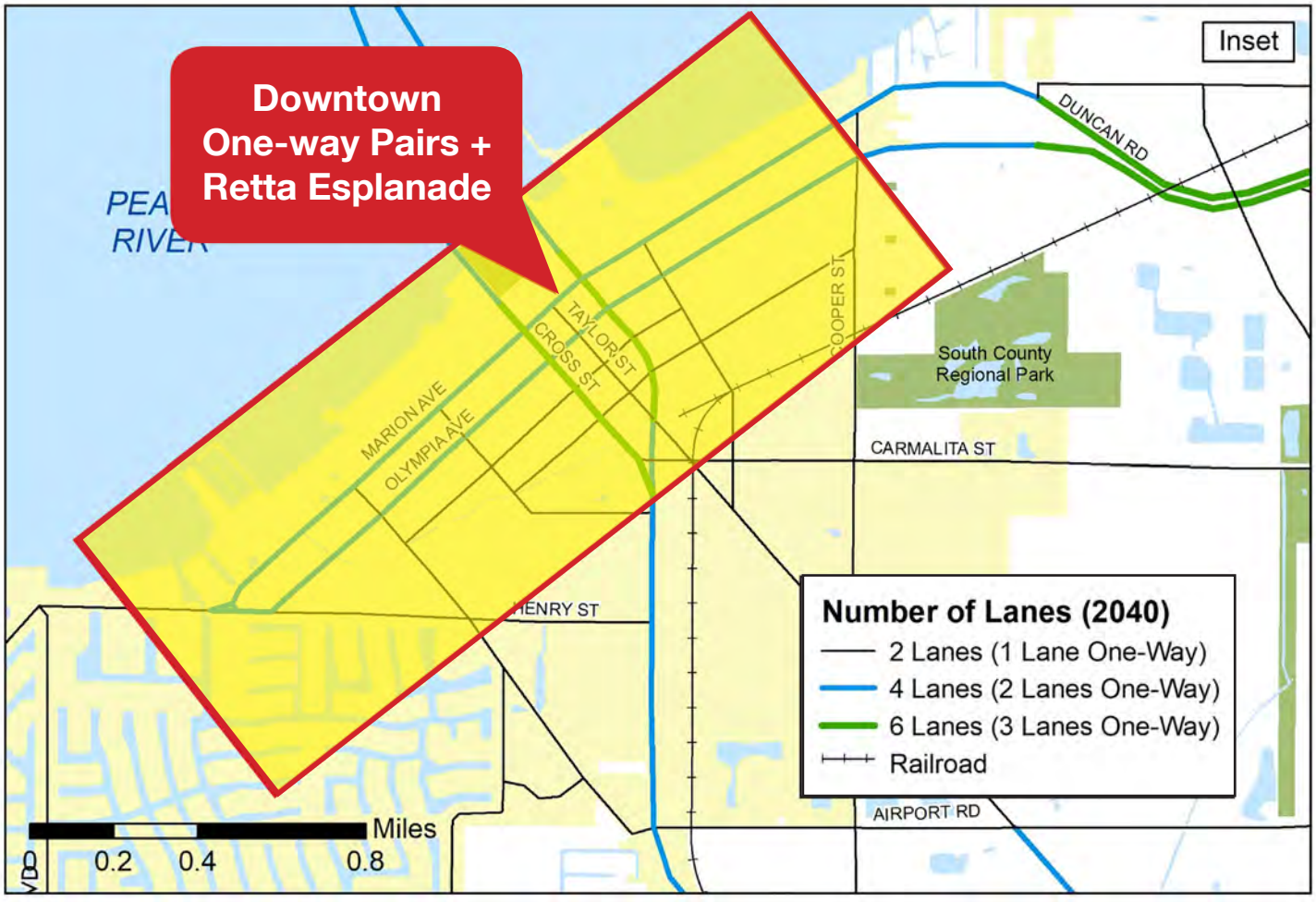


Figure 4-10: Bicycle Facilities

CHAPTER 4

Key Locations

Areas of key concern were identified based on the forecasted 2045 level of service conditions and recent crash history as illustrated in Figure 4-8. Additional guidance and recommendations for these areas are identified in the remainder of this chapter.



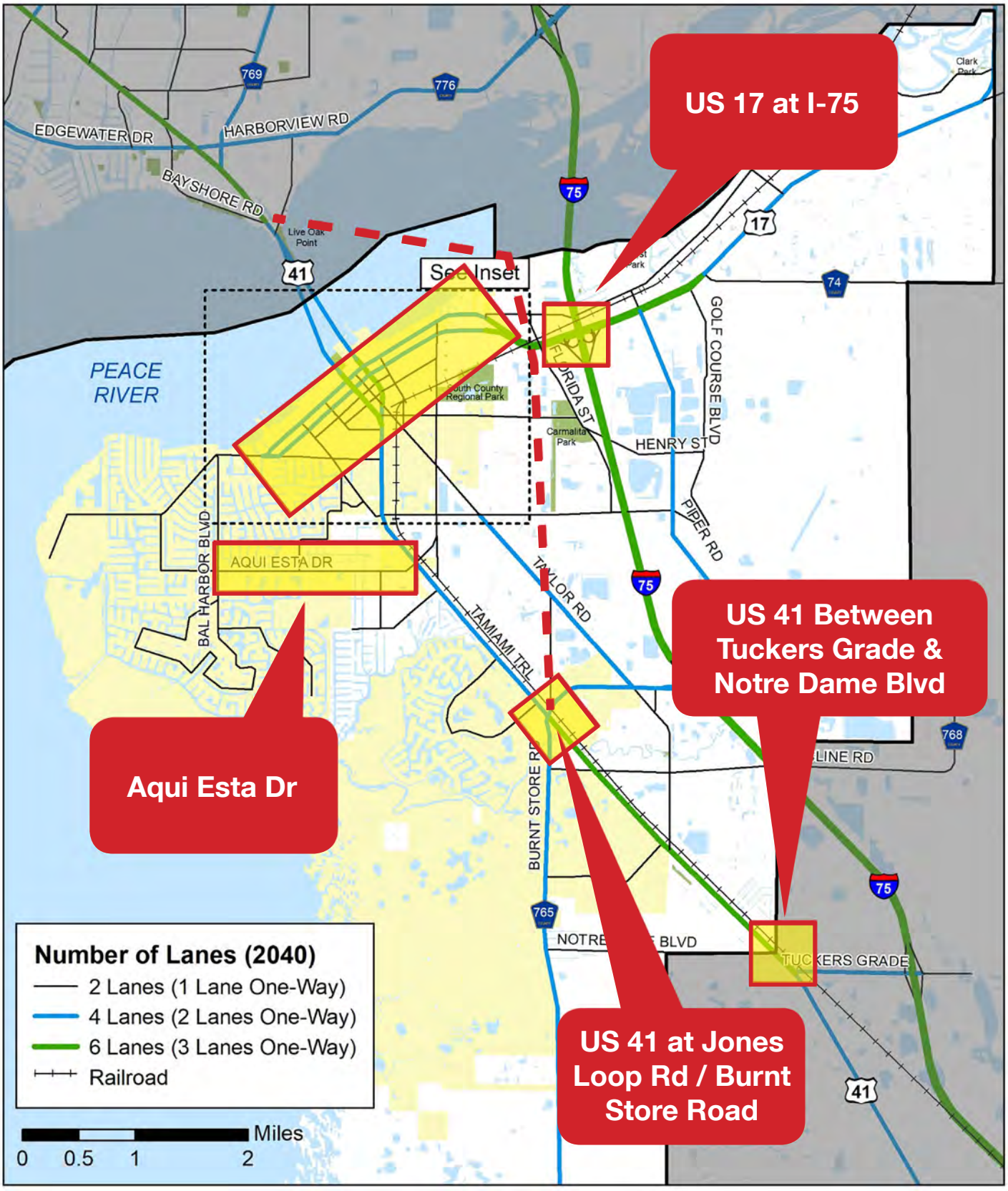


Figure 4-11: Key Areas of Concern

CHAPTER 4

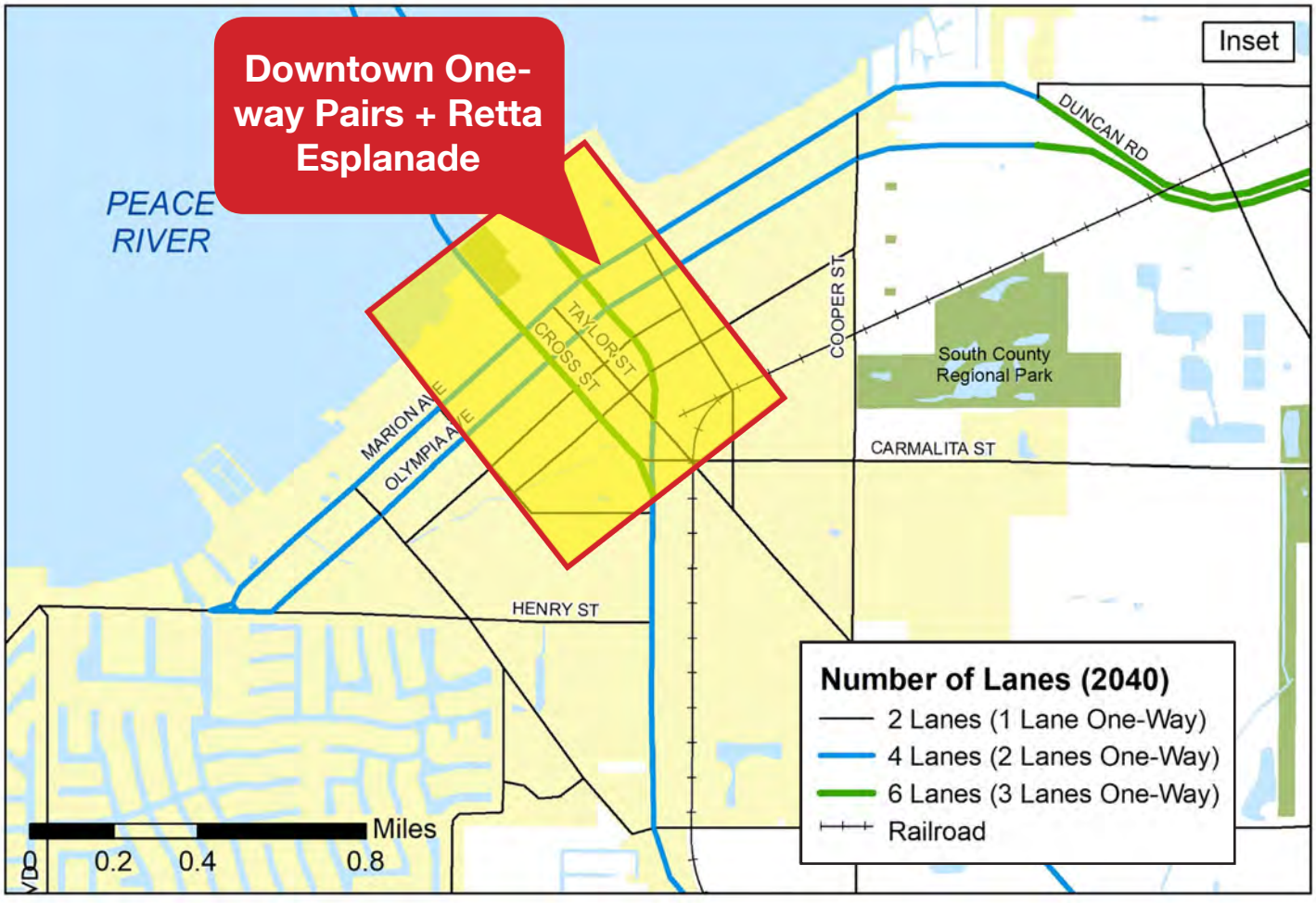
Downtown Improvement Recommendations

The downtown district provides a strong civic and commercial node that this anticipated to attract new development. The current design of the one-way pairs in the downtown area in some cases promote inappropriate speeds and at some intersections there are missing pedestrian crosswalks. Pedestrians are encouraged to cross at signalized intersections but at these intersections - West Marion Avenue at US 41 Northbound and West Olympia Avenue at US 41 Northbound, a pedestrian would have to cross three legs of the intersection just to cross east-west along the north side of the intersection.

There is also a significant need for both pedestrian and improved vehicular crossings at Retta Esplanade crossing the US 41 one-way pairs.

Recommendations: It is recommended that the City partner with FDOT to have an engineering study that addresses the following issues:

1. Full Pedestrian Crossings at signalized intersections
2. Signal control on the US 41 one-way pairs at Retta Esplanade
3. Identify and implement speed control measures on the US 41 and US 17 one-way pairs as appropriate




1


OLYMPIA
2


MARION AVE
LANE ENDS 500 FT
ONE WAY
3

CHAPTER 4

Downtown –West (Fisherman's Village) Recommendations

During peak season the Fisherman's Village district creates significant vehicle and pedestrian trips. Many visitors to the area may be new to the area for have diminished sight abilities. Observations at the location included:

1. Major pedestrian and vehicle conflicts
2. Inadequate control at the pedestrian crosswalks across West Marion Avenue and West Olympia Avenue at Maud Street.
3. Excessive speeds
4. Wrong-way driving – vehicles turning eastbound onto West Marion Avenue

Recommendations: It is recommended that the City undertake an engineering study at this location to consider:

1. Potential redesign of intersections and/or improved positive guidance to reduce the occurrence of wrong-way driving
2. Improved pedestrian crossing controls (Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon, Hybrid Signal, or full signalization)
3. Identify and implement speed control measures on West Marion Avenue and West Olympia Avenue

Source: FDOT

CHAPTER 4

Aqui Esta Drive Recommendations

The stakeholder interviews and forecasted traffic condition highlighted long term concerns regarding the design of Aqui Esta Drive. The lack of turn lanes on the corridor results in frequent congestion and crashes due to vehicles stopped to make left turns. There are also significant congestion concerns at the intersection of Aqui Esta Drive and Bal Harbor Blvd. Concerns were also raised regarding the ability for pedestrians to access properties on the southside of the roadway since most of the sidewalk is on the north side of the roadway.

Recommendations: It is recommended that the City undertake an engineering study at this location to consider:

1. Reconstructing the corridor with a three lane cross section that provides for left turns within the corridor.
2. Identify appropriate intersection improvements, especially at Bal Harbor Blvd. These improvements may include roundabouts or other intersection improvements to improve traffic operations.
3. Address appropriate multimodal improvements which may include additional sidewalks, multiuse trails, midblock crossings, and bicycle facilities.

CHAPTER 4

Downtown –East (US 17 One-Way Pairs) Recommendations

The one-way pairs of US 17 on East Marion Avenue and East Olympia Avenue present significant pedestrian challenges due to the long distance between traffic signals, speeds well in excess of the posted speed limits, and lack of midblock pedestrian crossing locations.

Recommendations: It is recommended that the City partner with FDOT to have an engineering study undertaken that addresses the following issues:

1. Improve multimodal conditions including the appropriate provision of mid-block pedestrian crossings
2. Identify and implement speed control measures on the US 17 one-way pairs as appropriate
3. Evaluate the needed number of lanes, especially Olympia Avenue which has three lanes yet only has one to two lanes of traffic feeding into it from the west at the US 41 Northbound intersection.

Source: FDOT


STORAGE

CHAPTER 4

US 41 Tamiami Trail at Burnt Store Road Recommendations

The long range transportation plan as previously identified the extension of Burnt Store Road north to US 17 as a long term unfunded need. This project is needed to mitigate forecasted traffic congestion on US 41 north of Burnt Store Road and to reduce regional traffic flowing through downtown Punta Gorda. This corridor would also provide an alternative to local trips traveling on Interstate 75.

Short term the constraint at the railroad crossing limits the capacity of the intersection. This area is also forecasted to experience significant growth through 2045. Failure to identify corridor alignments and intersection modifications in this area will potentially preclude the ability to make future improvements.

Recommendations: It is recommended that the City partner with FDOT to have an engineering study undertaken that addresses the following issues:

1. Short term intersection improvements, including bicycle and pedestrian connectivity and safety.
2. Long term corridor alignment recommendations to preserve the corridor for future implementation.

Source: FDOT

CHAPTER 4

US 41 Tamiami Trail at Tuckers Grade Recommendations

Notre Dame Blvd and Tuckers Grade provide the logical east west corridor in the southern part of the planning area however the two roadways are offset from each other with interlocking left turns off of US 41. This will potentially be a future bottleneck location on US 41.

Recommendations: It is recommended that the County and/or City partner with FDOT to have an engineering study undertaken that addresses the following issues:

1. Consider potential realignment of Tuckers Grade or Notre Dame Blvd to eliminate the offset intersections


N
Notre Dame Blvd.
Tamiami Trail
Tuckers Grade
Green Gulf Blvd.

Source: FDOT

CHAPTER 4

Action Items

CITYWIDE MASTER PLAN

The City should use the information and recommendations of this Buildout Transportation Plan to assist and guide the Citywide Master Plan currently underway.

2045 MPO LONG RANGE PLAN PROJECT NEEDS AND PRIORITIZATION

The City should use the recommendations of this report to identify the desired transportation Needs Plan projects including roadway, pedestrian, trails, and bicycle facilities in the City. The City should also review any proposed project prioritization processes to ensure that the projects proposed in the City compete favorably with other projects in the County and region. It would be advisable for the City to review and prioritize internally the priority pedestrian, bicycle, and trail projects for implementation.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The City should develop a list of priority major transportation projects and improvements as identified in pages 51 to 62. This includes the following activities:

- Monitoring proposed FDOT or County projects which may be modified to improve elements of the recommendations provided.
- Coordination with the MPO, FDOT, and County to have these projects added to the MPO Long Range Transportation Plan, MPO Transportation Improvement Plan, and/or Capital Improvements Plan.
- Compare proposed land development submittals to the recommended improvement and consider implementation of recommendations as potential mitigation measures of those proposed developments.
- Review and identify funding opportunities by the City to implement local projects or apply funding to FDOT or County projects to increase their prioritization.
- Identify the next actionable step for each project, assign responsibly, identify targeted deadlines and monitor progress.

CONTEXT CLASSIFICATION

Update the City's Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element to include the recommended Context Classification designations provided on pages 25 and 26. The City should also give consideration to updating the Land Development Code to identify appropriate transportation facilities on roadway that are not a part of the State Highway System, collector and local roadways. Specific attention should be given to appropriate pedestrian and sidewalk facilities.

MONITOR AND/OR REVISE LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS

Currently the acceptable Level of Service Standard for roadways is D. Consideration should be given to revising the standard to E on constrained corridors where increased volumes and speeds are counter to other City priorities such as safety and quality of life. Revisions of standards should address both the arterial segment/facility level of service and intersection level of service standards. This revised policy should be crafted as to avoid intersections from exceeding their physical capacity which would result in severe congestion.

MONITOR EMERGING TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

The City should monitor emerging technology trends and identify appropriate policy and land development code requirements. Specifically, the City should focus on the impacts and opportunities associated with automated, connected, electric and shared-use vehicles. The timelines for market and vehicle fleet penetration and the full nature and magnitude of the impacts are unknown at this time but it is clear that these technologies will have a greater impact on urbanized areas such as the City of Punta Gorda.

Punta Gorda

Florida's Harborside Hometown

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